

PRIESTHOOD AND SACRAMENTS

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LATIMER MONOGRAPHS

I

PRIESTHOOD
AND
SACRAMENTS

*A Study in
The Anglican-Methodist Report*

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THE MARCHAM MANOR PRESS

APPLEFORD ABINGDON BERKSHIRE

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October 1964

Printed in Great Britain by
Latimer Trend & Co Ltd Plymouth

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE author wishes to express his gratitude to his colleague the Rev. Dr. J. I. Packer, to his former preceptor the Rev. J. W. Wenham, and to three Methodist friends, the Rev. R. E. Davies, the Rev. Dr. I. H. Marshall and the Rev. Dr. A. Skevington Wood, for their kindness in reading his manuscript and for their helpful comments. Others who have given generous help are the Rev. Alwyn Cobb, to whom the first part of note 24 on page 37 is due; the Rev. Dr. John Kent, who has carefully answered enquiries about the Methodist Union of 1932; and G. E. Duffield, Esq., who in conversation as well as in his writings has helped the author to clarify his thinking on the subject of intercommunion. Needless to say, the author himself must accept complete responsibility for the use he has made of this assistance and for all which the succeeding pages contain.

It may also be proper to mention that a brief summary of the material to be found here has appeared in *The Church of England and the Methodist Church* (Abingdon, Marcham Manor Press, 1963), edited by J. I. Packer. In the present work the author's thesis is much more fully developed and documented.

CHAPTER ONE

APPROACHING THE SUBJECT

THIS monograph is the work of an Anglican who is concerned for the unity of the Christian Church in England, but who believes the report *Conversations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church* is open to question on a number of crucial issues, each of which demands thorough and careful investigation. Priesthood and the sacraments are only two of the matters raised by the *Report*, but it raises so many important matters (whether it discusses them or just mentions them in passing) that the writer has perhaps no need to apologise for confining his attention to a limited number of them. He certainly has no wish to suggest that these issues alone are important, or that on these alone the *Report* is open to criticism. For selecting these rather than others, however, he has three reasons.

The first reason is that the subjects are so closely united, the question of priesthood being at root only another way of stating the question of the eucharistic sacrifice. For although the sacerdotal theory of the ministry, at least in its modern form, ascribes to Christian ministers a mediatorial function in absolution also, the chief function that it ascribes to them is the chief function of Old Testament priests, the offering of sacrifice. And when the name *priest* was first given to Christian ministers, the offering of sacrifice seems to have been the priestly function in mind.¹

The second reason is that, on the subjects of priesthood and the sacraments, what are now called Anglo-Catholic views are widely supposed to have enjoyed a certain amount of sympathy from John Wesley. Methodists may reasonably feel some embarrassment on this score, and existing Methodist literature hardly gives them as much help as is needed for discovering what Wesley really did believe here. It is only against the background of the older Anglican theology (the real character of which, unfortunately, has often been misrepresented by Anglo-

Catholic writers) that Wesley's teaching and practice can be understood, and the author, as an Anglican, ventures to hope that he has been able to throw some light on Wesley's beliefs from Anglican literature. It would indeed be regrettable if Methodists agreed to accept teaching of which they could not really approve, under the impression that they were agreeing to accept the teaching of Wesley, should it in fact turn out not to be the teaching of Wesley at all.

The third and most basic reason for selecting these subjects is that they, unlike some of the other matters raised by the *Report*, have not been sufficiently discussed in modern English theology. Indeed, they can hardly be said to have been *discussed* at all, since nearly all recent writing, from whatever denomination, represents the same school of thought, and maintains a high sacramental realism, often combined with a high doctrine of the eucharistic sacrifice. The progress made by such teaching since the rise of the Oxford Movement, something over a century ago, has been phenomenal. It pours today from Anglican presses and pulpits, and commands a large majority in Convocation; it has penetrated to all parts of the Anglican Communion, bringing about in many provinces a revision of the traditional formularies; and, largely as a result of the Ecumenical Movement, which has reinforced it from Lutheran and Eastern sources, it is now spreading to many of the other denominations as well, both at home and abroad. In so far as this trend reflects a realisation of the importance of the sacraments, and a dissatisfaction with any theology which treats them as merely peripheral and thus fails to take the Biblical statements about them seriously, it is a trend that must be welcomed. But whether in other respects such teaching does justice to the statements of the Bible seems much more doubtful, especially after one has pondered the following questions: Does Scripture encourage us to account for the importance of the sacraments in this particular way? Is it possible to account for their importance in this way without derogating from the importance of faith, the word of God and the atonement? And is it not possible to account for their importance in a more satisfactory and scriptural way on the basis of the theology of our Reformers? These are questions which must be faced, and they all resolve themselves into one great question: Is the teach-

ing which is now so prevalent really true to Scripture? But since the *Report* also has adopted the current teaching, this question must also be asked of the teaching propounded in the *Report*. For the *Report*, as we shall see, though it has not satisfied Anglo-Catholics on all matters, has on the matters of the sacraments and priesthood adopted what is unmistakably Anglo-Catholic teaching.

Since the teaching of the *Report* is of such a character, however, it is imperative not only to enquire whether this teaching is true to Scripture, but also to ask the secondary question whether it is true to the doctrinal standards of the two churches. One cannot very easily imagine that the Methodist formularies teach Anglo-Catholic doctrine; and when one reflects that the Anglican formularies are three or four centuries old, whereas the Oxford Movement has not long celebrated its first centenary, one can see how unlikely it is that Anglo-Catholic doctrine is taught by the Anglican formularies either. It is common nowadays for people to think of Anglo-Catholicism (not just its sacramental doctrines, but its teaching and practice in general) as representative Anglicanism, but they would never have got this impression before about 1910. For between the rise of the Oxford Movement and that date (not to mention what happened in Scotland, Ireland and the United States) the archbishops and virtually all the bishops of the Church of England on no less than three occasions issued a joint pastoral letter against Anglo-Catholicism; numerous individual archbishops and bishops issued pastoral letters, charges, addresses, judicial 'opinions' and writings against it; it incurred the censure of Convocation and the Lambeth Conference; it was repeatedly condemned by judgments of the ecclesiastical courts; and it suffered severe and sustained criticism from Anglican divines of all schools of thought, not least from High Churchmen.² The author does not delight in recalling these things, or in adding his own criticisms of Anglo-Catholicism, since he owes much to Anglo-Catholics, and numbers many Anglo-Catholics among his friends. Yet the fact remains that, though there has been a marked change in the climate of opinion, and a moderate Anglo-Catholicism is now the order of the day, it is only a recent change, and when we come to compare some of the beliefs which are so much favoured today with the teaching

which prevailed in the Church of England during the first three hundred and fifty years from its Reformation, and remains embodied in its authorized formularies, we shall observe a sharp contrast and conflict between them. But as these novel beliefs are adopted in the Anglican-Methodist *Report*, the *Report* also will in consequence prove to conflict with the historic teaching of the reformed Church of England and with the teaching of its formularies.

It is, of course, a common view today that the historic denominational formularies of faith are a hindrance to ecumenical progress, and that the way forward is not to insist on an acceptance of them, even in their main substance, or to use them, when accepted, as standards for judging deviations of teaching; but rather to take as one's norms the various beliefs which in fact are current within the denominations, and to seek a synthesis between them. The present writer makes no apology that he has not adopted this approach, for it seems to him to be open to objection on four counts. First, inasmuch as the formularies of the Church of England and the Methodist Church embody the Biblical doctrines recovered at the Reformation, one could not regard as progress any union between the two churches in which they were not seriously taken into account. Secondly, an attempted synthesis of whatever opinions may now find supporters within the two churches would not simply mean dispensing with the formularies: such a synthesis could not proceed very far without also compromising the normative authority of Holy Scripture, to which the formularies appeal, and obliterating the distinction between truth and error. Thirdly, it would be wholly unrealistic to ignore the fact that the two churches, in virtue of their constitution, actually require of their ministers a certain adherence to the formularies.³ And fourthly, long-standing formularies, other things being equal, are surely a more hopeful basis for a permanent union of churches than is current opinion.

How far the *Report* has been influenced by this modern habit of thought one cannot be certain. For though it maintains that the formularies and the status which they hold call for revision (pp. 28, 37, 52), it recognises that they possess authority (at any rate those of the Church of England⁴) and need to be taken into account (pp. 8, 15 f., 28). Yet the teaching presented in

the *Report* is far from being a simple re-statement of what is taught in the Anglican and Methodist formularies, tried anew by Scripture, harmonised, paraphrased and adapted to the needs of the day. For not only the selection of principal topics for attention, but also the treatment of the topics selected, reflect the theological interests and opinions which are characteristic of the twentieth century at least as clearly as they reflect those which are embodied in the Thirty-nine Articles or Wesley's sermons, and some may think a good deal more clearly.

A report of this kind is not expected to be original in its thought—it could not be truly representative if it were—but when it draws on other sources than the doctrinal standards of the bodies represented, the task of appraising it becomes more difficult. For being designedly brief, it is bound to say many things by way of summary or allusion instead of expressing them in full, and before a judgment can be formed its statements must be traced to their sources, so that their true meaning can be seen, and to the best advantage. This then has been one of the chief tasks of the present writer—to trace statements made in the *Report* to their sources in current theological literature, so that the relation they bear to the formularies and to Scripture can be rightly assessed. The author has been very wary of imputing to the *Report* any current view which it has not more or less explicitly adopted, and if he has in any instance advanced criticisms based upon a mistaken interpretation of its statements, he is genuinely sorry, whether or not the *Report's* obscurity of style may prove to have been partly responsible. In such cases, all that he ought to have said is that the *Report* is open to an objectionable interpretation. But until any of his interpretations has been shown to be mistaken, he believes that his criticisms must stand.

In answer to all this it may of course be said (as it sometimes is said) that no one is required to accept the theological assertions of the *Report*: all that is asked of the two churches is that they should adopt its practical proposals. Even the negotiators who produced the *Report*, the argument continues, are unwilling to subscribe as individuals to every statement it contains (*Report*, p. 11). However, most people regard this approach as unrealistic, and with good reason. For to argue in this way is to misunderstand the intentions of the negotiators and the

nature of the scheme they have put forward. At no stage in the conversations has theology been merely peripheral. The two churches entered upon the negotiations only after making it clear that they were concerned not simply with the extension of episcopacy to the Methodist Church, but also with the interpretation of episcopacy on which the institution might be thus extended (*Report*, p. 7 f.). The question of the theological interpretation of episcopacy has consequently been a basic question for the negotiators to investigate, and it is no accident that the matter occupies so prominent a place in both the documents they have produced—the *Interim Statement* (chs. 4–5) and the *Report* (pp. 10, 24–7, 38, 48). But episcopacy is not the only theological subject for which the negotiators show concern. They are speaking of theology in general when, in chapter two of the *Interim Statement*, they affirm that the conversations ‘pre-suppose an existing unity in Christian faith and purpose *without which there would be no point in discussing the possibility of closer ties*’ (our italics) and proceed to detail a good many theological truths which the two churches agree in accepting. Similarly, in the *Report* itself, it is emphasised that the practical proposals ‘must be read and understood in the light of the theological considerations . . . set out in the succeeding chapters’ (p. 9, with which compare also p. 35), and that these theological considerations (of which Scripture and tradition, the gospel, church order, episcopacy, and the sacraments are specified) ‘form the background’ of the practical proposals (p. 10). A clear illustration of the relationship between the theological and practical chapters of the *Report* is supplied not only by the case of episcopacy but also by that of priesthood. For after defining priesthood in terms of the eucharistic sacrifice and formal absolutions (p. 23 f.), the *Report* goes on to propose that in the Service of Reconciliation Methodist ministers should be admitted to ‘the office of priest’ (p. 43), and that thereafter these particular functions should be performed in the Methodist Church by priests alone (p. 48). In view of all this, it is plain that the practical proposals of the *Report* must not be isolated from the underlying theological principles expounded in its second, third and fourth chapters. Nothing is achieved by shutting one’s eyes to the fact that what the two churches are being asked to accept is not simply a programme for action, but also

a confession of faith. And though no member of either church, probably, would be bound by this confession in more detail than the authors themselves wish to be bound by it, yet to accept the proposals would be to give a general assent to its teaching, and to make it in effect one of the doctrinal standards of the two churches—the only one, apart from the creeds, which they would have in common. It would be impossible thereafter to resist any move either to make the *Report* an official doctrinal standard, or to revise the existing standards so as to confirm them to this more up-to-date and ecumenical expression of ‘the mind of the Church’. It therefore behoves the members of the two churches, before accepting the proposals, to examine the teaching of the theological chapters with the greatest care.

The order of topics in this monograph will as far as possible follow the order observed in the *Report*. The *Report* deals with the subject of priesthood in chapter three (on pages 23 and 24), and devotes to the sacraments the whole of chapter four, where it speaks first of the sacraments in general, then of baptism, and lastly of the Holy Communion. It will not be possible to say our final word on priesthood until our fifth chapter, after we have given some consideration to the subject of the Holy Communion, but apart from this the order of the *Report* will be preserved.

NOTES

¹ See p. 26 f. below, and J. H. Bernard in H. B. Swete (ed.), *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry*, pp. 226–8.

² Some part of the evidence for these statements may be found in J. C. Sharpe (ed.), *A Vindication of Anglo-Catholic Principles* (a symposium by High Churchmen of the old school, which went through three editions, directed against Anglo-Catholicism, as the term is understood today), and in A. M. W. Christopher and J. C. Sharpe (edd.), *Quousque?* (a collection of episcopal charges, etc., relevant to Anglo-Catholicism).

³ The declaration of assent to the Thirty-nine Articles and the (1662) Prayer Book that is made by clergy of the Church of England is imposed by Canon 36, as revised in 1865, and by the relevant acts of parliament. The obligation of Methodist ministers and lay-preachers to adhere to the teaching of their Church is imposed by the thirty-second clause of the Deed of Union, which took effect in 1932; and in the services which the Book of Offices provides for their ordination or public recognition they are interrogated on the matter. The same clause of the Deed of Union defines the authoritative documents in which the teaching of the Methodist Church is embodied: see note 4 below.

⁴ What the *Report* says of the Methodist Church in this connection—that ‘the Methodist Church has no official formulae corresponding to the Articles and . . . Catechism’ (p. 29)—is somewhat misleading. For the Methodist Church is not without formularies, though they may not have exactly the same status as the formularies of the Church of England. The Methodist Deed of Union, which took effect in 1932, besides containing a formidable statement of its own on the doctrine of the ministry and a much briefer statement on the origin and obligation of the two sacraments, acknowledges the historic creeds, and adopts Wesley’s *Forty-four Sermons* and *Notes on the New Testament* as doctrinal standards for the Methodist Church (clause 32). In addition, it gives the Methodist Conference final authority in the interpretation of Methodist teaching (clause 33), an authority which the Conference is considered to have exercised by adopting from time to time statements on such subjects as the Church, the ministry and baptism.

CHAPTER TWO

PRIESTHOOD

IT is the normal practice of theologians to discuss priesthood in three connections—in connection with believers, in connection with Christ, and in connection with the ministry. The *Report* makes reference to all three aspects of the subject, and it will be convenient to consider first the priesthood of believers. On this the *Report* has much to say (see especially p. 23 f.), and it is indeed a crucial doctrine. Before proceeding further we shall therefore seek to discover its meaning.

The Priesthood of all Believers

The New Testament basis of the doctrine lies in I Pet. ii, 5, 9; Rev. i, 6; v, 10; xx, 6; and its Old Testament background is to be found in Exod. xix, 6; Isa. lxi, 6. In the First Epistle of Peter the Church is spoken of corporately as a 'priesthood', while in Revelation (following Exodus and Isaiah) Christians are spoken of individually as 'priests'.¹ Their priesthood is linked with kingship (see Revelation and I Peter) and with holiness (see Exodus, I Peter and Revelation). The holiness in question is not of the merely external kind, but even in Exodus is a holiness which involves obedience to the Lord's voice, while in the First Epistle of Peter it is the holiness of those who are 'living', 'spiritual', 'believing', 'chosen', enjoying 'light' and 'mercy' from God.

Some suppose that the essential characteristic of a priest, as the Bible conceives him, is the power of mediation; but a more basic characteristic is the right of access to God. It is on this that his power of mediation is grounded. Because of the priest's nearness to God, we find him in the Old Testament interceding for the people (Ps. xcix, 6; Joel ii, 17), blessing the people (Num. vi, 22-7) and eating at God's table (Lev. xxi, 22); but it was especially for the acceptable presentation of sacrifices that he drew near (Lev. x, 3; xxi, 17, 21, 23; Num. xvi, 5), sacrifices

which for the most part were brought by others but were in some cases supplied by himself. Nor does this exhaust the functions of the Old Testament priesthood, who had the further duty of teaching the Mosaic Law (Lev. x, 11; Deut. xvii, 11; xxiv, 8; Hag. ii, 11; Mal. ii, 5-7).

When the Bible figuratively applies the name of 'priests' to God's people, however, it must not be supposed that all these functions of the priesthood are necessarily in mind, for it is normal in figurative language to give the same name to things which are only in one or two respects alike. Indeed, when Exodus and Isaiah speak of God's people as priests, it may well be that none of these functions is in mind, but simply the fact that God's people (in some such way as the priesthood, when contrasted with the laity) are by contrast with the other nations holy (Exod. xix, 6 itself, also Lev. xx, 26; Deut. vii, 6; xiv, 2, 21, etc.) and nigh unto Him (Deut. iv, 7; Ps. cxlviii, 14). Moreover, the sole function of priesthood which the Bible explicitly attributes to God's people in any of the other passages where it describes them as priests is that they draw near to Him to offer acceptable sacrifices (I Pet. ii, 5). The sacrifices to which St. Peter here refers he calls 'spiritual sacrifices' (implying that they are not Jewish sacrifices but Christian—sacrifices belonging not to the age of outward observances, but to the age of the Spirit); and these, like the spiritual worship of which we read elsewhere in the New Testament (John iv, 23 f.; Rom. xii, 1; Phil. iii, 3), are doubtless such sacrifices as faith (Phil. ii, 17), prayer (Rev. v, 8; viii, 3), praise (Heb. xiii, 15), gifts to the ministry (Phil. iv, 18), gifts to the poor (Heb. xiii, 16), evangelism (Rom. xv, 16 f.), the laying down of one's life for the gospel's sake (Phil. ii, 17; II Tim. iv, 6; Rev. vi, 9) and the consecration of one's life to the will of God (Rom. xii, 1). There are no other Christian sacrifices mentioned in the New Testament, and the only other Christian sacrifices which could be postulated on the analogy of these would not be dependant for their sacrificial character on ritual or material requirements, but simply on being performed or given by men in whom dwelt the Spirit of God. In none of the cases here listed (it is probably a misunderstanding to regard Rom. xv, 16 f. as an exception²) is the Christian drawing near to present a sacrifice which he has not supplied himself. The Christian priest does not mediate sacri-

fices for others, and it is doubtful whether the idea that he mediates the gospel to others and mediates in prayer for others (*Report*, p. 23, paragraphs 2-3) is not likewise foreign to the New Testament conception of his priesthood. The only aspect under which evangelism and prayer are certainly part of his ministry is that of personal spiritual sacrifices.³

The Priesthood of Believers and the Priesthood of Christ

In what sense is the priesthood of Christians related to the priesthood of Christ? The *Report* (p. 23, paragraph 2) speaks of the Church as 'sharing in his [Christ's] priestly ministry'. The Methodist dissentients, more warily, speak of the Church as exercising its priesthood 'in dependence upon the great High Priest Jesus Christ' (*Report*, p. 61). All graces depend upon the saving work of Jesus Christ, therefore the grace of Christian priesthood also, but to say that our priestly ministry is a *share* in Christ's priestly ministry must surely suggest that we help in Christ's saving work, and in measure save ourselves. This derogation from the glory of the Saviour is doubtless not intended, but as it stands it opens the door to those conceptions of the eucharistic sacrifice which in some sense identify the latter with Christ's work of atonement, and which, as we shall see in chapter six, the *Report* declines to repudiate, and even seems to favour.

What then is the real relationship between the priesthood of Christ and that of the Church? In exploring this question, the first thing to note is that the relationship is nowhere explicitly dealt with in the New Testament. The doctrine of the priesthood of believers is found only in the First Epistle of Peter and Revelation, while the doctrine of Christ's priesthood is found only in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The *sacrifice* of Christ indeed figures in the First Epistle of Peter and Revelation, while Hebrews speaks of the believer's *access* to God and his *spiritual sacrifices*, but Christ is not called a priest in the first case, nor the believer in the second. Since the New Testament gets no nearer to relating the two priesthoods, it is rash to jump to the conclusion that when Christ is called a priest the writer intends us to connect this with the fact that Christians are priests, and *vice versa*. A connection is not implicit in the language unless it is implicit in the teaching. And when we examine the teaching of

Hebrews on the priesthood of Christ, and the teaching of Revelation and the First Epistle of Peter on the priesthood of Christians, the only point of similarity to be found is that in both cases there is access to God for the presentation of acceptable sacrifice. Here the similarity ends. For the access of Christ is by desert (Heb. vii, 26), whereas that of Christians is by God's mercy (I Pet. ii, 9 f.; Rev. i, 5 f.; v, 9 f.); the sacrifice Christ brings is *Himself*, the sinless Son of God, whereas the sacrifices Christians bring are at most *themselves*, sinners saved by grace (cp. Rom. xii, 1); the sacrifice of Christ atones, whereas the sacrifices of Christians are only acceptable because of the atonement made by Christ (I Pet. ii, 5; cp. also Heb. xiii, 15). These surely are distinctions of the greatest importance, and to gloss over them, or appear to deny them, by merging the Church's priesthood into Christ's, is a grave defect in such a report.⁴

The Priesthood of Believers and the Priesthood of the Ministry

Having examined the relationship of the Church's priesthood to Christ's, there remains the task of examining its relationship to the priesthood of the clergy. The authors of the Dissentient View take a strong line on this question, and point out that it is contrary both to the New Testament⁵ and to the Methodist Deed of Union⁶ to attribute to the ministry a priesthood different in kind from that which is common to the Lord's people (*Report*, p. 60 f.). On the other hand the majority report, as so often, speaks with two voices, and follows pretty closely the inconsistent theory propounded at the end of the last century by members of the *Lux Mundi* school, its chief exponent being R. C. Moberly in his book *Ministerial Priesthood*.

Moberly was one of those Anglo-Catholic theologians who attempted to commend 'Catholic' beliefs to Anglican Protestants by restating them, so as to give them, at any rate in appearance, a less Roman and more Biblical character. Faced on the one hand with the united affirmation of the reformed churches that the ministry are in no other sense priests than the laity, and on the other with the assertion of the Council of Trent that Christ by His words 'Do this in remembrance of me' constituted the apostles and their successors priests in a unique sense,⁷ he attempted to mediate between these two doctrines, by suggesting that though all Christians are priests, some are more

priestly than others. Anglo-Catholic writers of an earlier generation had sided with the Council of Trent,⁸ but Moberly and his associates modified this position by suggesting (to state his theory more precisely) that not only are ministers necessary to the whole Church (compare 1 Cor. xii, 14-30), but they have an exclusive right to act as the representatives of the whole Church, and that it is ministers therefore who primarily exercise the priesthood which belongs in the last resort to laymen as well. If Moberly had been thinking of such spiritual sacrifices as evangelism (Rom. xv, 16 f.) and prayer (Rev. v, 8; viii, 3), which are especially, though far from exclusively, ministerial duties (Acts vi, 4, etc.), it would not have been so important to deny this; though it would still have been desirable to qualify the assertion that the right of the ministry is exclusive, and to point out that it is a one-sided account, since there are other spiritual sacrifices which it is especially the duty of the laity to offer (see Phil. iv, 18), besides those in which the clergy and laity have a like interest. When it is discovered, however, that the priestly acts which Moberly (with the Council of Trent⁹) wishes to assign to the ministry are the offering of the eucharistic sacrifice and the pronouncement of absolution,¹⁰ which are not so much as mentioned among the spiritual sacrifices of the New Testament, the theory at once loses all plausibility. Moberly is in fact contending for a literal priesthood, comparable to that of the Old Testament, and is not content with the spiritualisation of the idea which the New Testament has carried through. This is not to say that Moberly is unconcerned for the inner sanctity of the clergy—he is deeply concerned for it, and attempts to relate it to his doctrine of the eucharist. But the fact remains that he wants to retain a priestly caste, making ritual sacrifices, like that which existed under the Old Covenant. Now, the New Testament doctrine of the priesthood of all believers (the only earthly priesthood which the New Testament recognises) is so far from furnishing a basis for this conception as to be irreconcilably opposed to it.¹¹

Further difficulties of his theory are that, though the offering of sacrifice is one of the mediatorial functions which Scripture attributes to priests, absolution is not;¹² that absolution and the eucharistic sacrifice, in such senses as Anglo-Catholics and Roman Catholics understand them, find no support in Scrip-

ture, but are rather repugnant to it;¹³ and that if the priesthood of the ministry belongs in the last resort to the laity as well, then it is impossible that ministers should ever truly become mediators between the laity and God, which is what Anglo-Catholics and Roman Catholics are contending for. One cannot have it both ways. The New Testament doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is a denial of sacerdotalism, and Moberly's attempt to make it the basis of sacerdotalism was doomed from the outset.

The majority report likewise wants to have it both ways. On the one hand, in the true sacerdotal strain, it says that "the priesthood of all believers" does not mean that every individual believer has the *right* to perform every ministerial or priestly function. Within the exercise of the corporate priesthood there fall to be performed certain actions, historically and generally regarded as priestly, which are in many Churches, including the Church of England, reserved to those who have been specifically ordained, as ministers of the word and sacraments, to perform them. These include the celebration of the Holy Communion, which is generally held to be in some sense a sacrifice, and the formal pronouncing of absolution with the authority of the Church.' Then comes the paradox. 'But even in these actions, and most manifestly in the Holy Communion, the ministerial priest acts representatively and in conjunction with the laity's exercise of its priesthood' (*Report*, p. 23, paragraph 4).¹⁴

This, as can readily be seen, is open to all the objections to which Moberly's view is open. Like Moberly, the authors of the *Report* reserve to the clergy absolution and the offering of the eucharistic sacrifice, as being priestly functions. Like Moberly, they nevertheless maintain that in performing these functions the clergy act as representatives of the whole priesthood of believers. And like Moberly (though the phrase would not by itself be a significant indication of dependence) they speak of the 'ministerial priest'.¹⁵

It may be argued in defence of the *Report* that this is not sacerdotalism, since the passage denies to believers only 'the *right*' to perform all priestly functions, implying that they have the power. But if they lack the right, they might just as well lack the power also. Furthermore, if believers have not the right to

exercise their own priesthood, no one has—unless indeed the clergy are equal to God, and can take the laity's God-given rights away. It is certainly God-given rights that are in question here, not ecclesiastical permission, for it is God alone who appoints priests (Num. xvi-xvii; II Chron. xxvi, 16-21; Heb. v, 4-6), and it is He who has appointed believers as such. The *Report*, moreover, clearly recognises that it is dealing with God-given rights, since it represents the Church of England as objecting to the administration of Holy Communion in special circumstances by laymen, even when they have ecclesiastical permission, as in the Methodist Church (pp. 24, 48, 55).¹⁶

Again, it may be urged in defence of the *Report* that the passage speaks of the Holy Communion as only '*in some sense* a sacrifice'. But we are left in no doubt that it is a sacerdotal sense. The Holy Communion is a sacrifice in such a sense that only the clergy have the right to offer it.

Yet again, it may be argued that the clerical prerogative of absolution, according to this passage, is only 'the *formal* pronouncing of absolution *with the authority of the Church*', which suggests that there are also informal absolutions without the authority of the Church.¹⁷ But though it is not stated that a 'formal' absolution is more efficacious than an informal one, the implication is clear. And what is this 'Church' which gives 'authority' to some of its members formally to absolve itself? Unless the statement is pure nonsense,¹⁸ 'the Church' must here mean the sacerdotal hierarchy, who already have the authority to absolve the laity, and who alone can pass this authority on to others.

At the beginning of the passage quoted, as will have been observed, the words 'ministerial' and 'priestly' are equated: '“the priesthood of all believers”', we read, 'does not mean that every individual believer has the *right* to perform every ministerial or priestly function.'¹⁹ This is a fair sample of the equivocations with which the *Report* abounds. If the words 'or priestly' had been omitted, the sentence would have been unobjectionable. It would simply have stated the important truth that the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers does not make every man his own clergyman. God, who created the priesthood of all believers, also created ministerial oversight, which secures an orderly exercise of priestly functions both by ministers and by laymen.

But this only underlines the fact that ministry and priesthood are two distinct conceptions,²⁰ whereas the *Report*, by including the words 'or priestly', confounds them. Admittedly the Old Testament ministry, like that of the New Testament, had the duties of teaching and prayer: in this respect Christian ministers undoubtedly do perform priestly work. Yet the characteristic work of the Old Testament priesthood was not prayer or even teaching but the offering of sacrifice, and this is the function which the New Testament, as was seen earlier, has in mind when it speaks of the priesthood of all believers. Now, the offering of sacrifice is not the work of the Christian ministry in any sense in which it is not the work of the Christian laity, and the *Report* should not use language which suggests that it is.

Two other phrases in this passage which call for comment are the assertions that the administration of Holy Communion and the formal pronouncement of absolution are functions 'historically and generally regarded as priestly', and that the Holy Communion is 'generally held to be in some sense a sacrifice'. There is a confusion here between two different questions. The first question is, How long and how widely has priestly and sacrificial language been used about the ministry and the Lord's Supper? To this the answer given by the *Report* would be right: such language is general in the Church, and has been so during most of the Church's history, though in many cases the usage has been figurative. We shall have more to say about this in chapter five. The other question is, How long and how widely have the sacerdotal ideas favoured by the *Report* been associated with such language? To this the correct answer would be, Only during the dark ages of the Church, and today in its unreformed branches and members.

The Teaching of the Church of England

The final question raised by the passage under discussion, and raised in an acute form, is the question why it is that the Church of England has always reserved the administration of Holy Communion and the pronouncement of absolution to presbyters. Is it, as the *Report* suggests, because these are sacerdotal functions, and the Church of England regards its presbyters as 'priests' in the sacerdotal sense of the word? The heirs of the Oxford Movement are accustomed to say that it is, but this is

not the authentic Anglican view, which can be learned only from the authorised Anglican formularies, understood in their original, intended and natural sense. At the Reformation, the services of the Church of England were diligently purged of all sacerdotal implications. The medieval form of service for the ordering of priests was full of rites and expressions related to sacrifice. These were all excised in the revision, and they were replaced by the rite of the presentation of a Bible, and by language related to teaching and pastoral care, which are the great themes of the Prayer Book service. The communion service underwent a similar purge, and the word 'altar' was carefully expunged from all services.²¹ The significance of these measures is made explicit by the Book of Homilies, which states that the Christian needs 'no sacrificing priest' (*Of the Worthy Receiving of the Sacrament*, part 1),²² and by Article 31, where, in accordance with the known beliefs of Cranmer, the chief author of the Articles, and of Parker and Jewel, who were chiefly responsible for their revision, the sacrifice of the mass is repudiated as a fable and a blasphemy.²³ That the word 'priest' was retained in the Prayer Book cannot have any sacrificial implications, seeing that Cranmer, the real author of the book, made it his great concern in his main theological writings to overthrow the mass, while Cranmer's associates in the work of reformation all shared his views on the subject. Thus Latimer maintained that Christian ministers are not a sacrificing priesthood (*Sermons and Remains*, pp. 254-6, 264, etc.), while Philpot (*Examination and Writings*, p. 405 f.) and Hutchinson (*Works*, pp. 46, 49 f.) asserted that there is no priesthood in the Church today but the priesthood of all believers, in which clergy and laity alike share—Hutchinson adding that the clergy can be called a priesthood in the sense of *presbyterium* but not in the sense of *sacerdotium*. And when in Elizabeth's reign the Puritans criticised the Prayer Book for using the word 'priest', Hooker, that most illustrious of Anglican theologians, replied that, though the word could be misinterpreted, it had no *necessary* sacrificial connotation (*Ecclesiastical Polity* 5: 78: 2 f.); while Whitgift, the learned Archbishop of Canterbury, replied that it was derived from *presbyter* not *sacerdos* (*Works*, vol. 3, p. 350 f.); and the same explanation of the word was given by Bishop Jewel (*Works*, vol. 4, p. 911 f.), William Fulke (*A Defence*, pp. 240-77) and others.²⁴

Such was the mind of the Anglican Reformers, and though certain sacerdotal ideas were revived in the Church of England by the seventeenth-century Laudians, these ideas were not influential enough to bring about any change in the formularies.²⁵ When the Prayer Book was last revised, in 1662, it was not affected by them in any way.²⁶

The Administration of Holy Communion

But if the framers of the Anglican formularies did not regard the minister at the Holy Communion as a priest offering sacrifice, why did they not permit deacons or laymen to administer²⁷ the sacrament? In the Prayer Book service for the ordering of deacons, the deacon is authorised (in the absence of the priest) to baptize, but only to assist at the Holy Communion. Even a layman or laywoman, if need be, may baptize, as in antiquity: such is the ruling on Anglican teaching which has been given by the courts.²⁸ What is the reason for this discrepancy between the sacraments? There is no suggestion of it in the New Testament, where the administration of Holy Communion is on no other footing than that of baptism, and is plainly stated to belong to the recipients of the sacrament.²⁹ Nor can it be traced to Calvin, whose influence was so strong in the English Reformation, since Calvin insisted that the presbyter should administer both sacraments alike (*Institutes* 4: 15: 20-2). The obvious answer is found in the reluctance of the Anglican Reformers to break ancient customs without due cause (see the preface *Of Ceremonies* in the Prayer Book, and Article 34). For whereas since ancient times it has been normal to allow deacons, and in emergencies laymen, to baptize,³⁰ by a custom equally widespread and even earlier attested only bishops and presbyters have been permitted to administer the Holy Communion. Evidence known to the compilers of the Prayer Book and evidence which has come to light since their day is in full agreement on the extreme antiquity of the custom. There is no suggestion of it, as we have said, in the New Testament. But what we do find there is that the government of local churches is being placed in the hands of presbyter-bishops, assisted apparently by deacons (Acts xiv, 23; xx, 17, 28; Phil. i, 1; I Tim. iii, 1-13; v, 17; Titus i, 5-9; Heb. xiii, 17, 24); and an important part of the task of governing which these presbyter-bishops per-

formed must undoubtedly have been the superintendence of the ministry of the word and the sacraments. How far they exercised this ministry themselves would vary. We know that, as in the case of the Jewish elders (*presbuteroi*) who preceded them,³¹ they all governed but did not all teach—at any rate, not all to the same extent (I Tim. v, 17); though they were specially honoured if they did teach (*ibid.*,) and, whether they actually taught or not, they were required to be capable of teaching (I Tim. iii, 2; Titus i, 9) and to take responsibility for teaching (Acts xx, 28). We have less information from the New Testament on the ministry of the sacraments, and we do not know how far it was personally exercised in that period by the presbyter-bishops. Our Lord, in the days of His flesh, committed baptism to subordinates (John iv, 1, 1f.), but He administered the Holy Communion, on the one occasion that He administered it, in person. The reason may be that baptism was a practice well known to His disciples, especially from the example of John, whereas in the Holy Communion He was instituting what in important respects was a new rite. The apostles followed our Lord's practice of committing baptism to subordinates (Acts x, 48; I Cor. i, 14–17). Whether the presbyter-bishops or the early monarchical bishops did the same we cannot tell: Ignatius, unfortunately, is ambiguous on this point (*Epistle to the Smyrnaeans*, section 8), and the statement of Hippolytus (*Apostolic Tradition* 21: 11) varies from text to text. Tertullian says that the chief *right* in the matter rests with the chief minister, the bishop (as it undoubtedly would, whether or not the bishop was in the habit of delegating the task); but, subject to the bishop's authority, he attributes the right to presbyters and deacons also (*On Baptism*, ch. 17).

In the case of the Holy Communion, we have more evidence from the early Fathers than in the case of baptism, but less from the New Testament. The New Testament does not tell us what the apostles did with regard to the Holy Communion. If they copied our Lord and administered it in person, one must infer from I Cor. i, 17, that they did not do so on principle. The presbyter-bishops, however, seem from a very early period to have administered it in person. For even when the First Epistle of Clement was written (c. A.D. 95) the custom appears to have existed long enough already, at least in Rome and Corinth, to

have become a rule; since the epistle warns the Corinthian Christians not to usurp the functions of their superiors at the giving of thanks, and blames them for thrusting out the presbyter-bishops who have offered the gifts of the episcopal office in a holy and irreproachable manner (sections 40-4). Likewise in the *Didache*, also dating perhaps from the end of the first century, it is apparently to the bishops and deacons, alongside certain extraordinary ministers (prophets and teachers), that the administration of the eucharist pertains (sections 10, 14 f.). We cannot be sure whether the deacons had at this date acquired specific auxiliary functions at the eucharist, such as those described half a century later by Justin Martyr, a writer who had widespread knowledge of the Christian Church, and was addressing the Roman emperor as its representative (*First Apology*, chs. 65, 67; see also Hippolytus's *Apostolic Tradition* iv, 2; ix, 11; xxiii, 7; xxiv, 1 f., which dates from c. A.D. 215). But before the deacons could acquire specific auxiliary functions, it must also have been settled that the one who 'presided' at the eucharist was to be a presbyter-bishop or bishop. To such 'presidents', about fifty years after Justin Martyr, the administration of the eucharist is explicitly confined by Tertullian (*On the Soldiers' Garland*, ch. 3).

With the emergence of monarchical episcopacy at the beginning of the second century, we find the bishop carrying with him into his new dignity the administration of the eucharist, which is an indication that it had already become appropriated to the highest order of ministry. The striking words in which Ignatius tells us this are 'Let that be held a valid eucharist which is under the bishop or one to whom he shall have committed it' (*Epistle to the Smyrnaeans*, section 8). Those to whom the bishop might commit it were probably the presbyters, who already had the right to administer the eucharist, and may well have been unwilling to forgo the right. Examples of bishops administering in person are supplied towards the end of the century by Irenaeus, referring to Anicetus and Polycarp a generation earlier (in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 5: 24: 17).

About the year A.D. 200, Tertullian censures the heretics for allowing laymen to perform the functions of 'priesthood' (*On Prescription*, ch. 41). It may be seen from his statements elsewhere (*On Baptism*, ch. 17, *On Exhortation to Chastity*, ch. 7, *On*

the *Veiling of Virgins*, ch. 9) that the functions reserved for priests are the administration of baptism and Holy Communion, and probably teaching. Tertullian is the first Christian writer to speak of the clergy in the language of priesthood, but his usage seems to be the same as that which later became common, for 'priest' in these passages apparently means 'presbyter', and 'high priest' certainly means 'bishop'. Since he is contrasting the priest not with the deacon but with the layman, he should not be understood to contradict himself on the regularity of baptism by deacons. The reason why, in the second passage mentioned, he speaks of baptism and the administration of the eucharist as the prerogatives of 'priests' or 'presbyters', is doubtless that priests or presbyters, unlike deacons, were permitted to perform both. The same teaching is given rather more explicitly in Hippolytus's *Apostolic Tradition*, where we find that the bishop and presbyter, as being 'high priest' and 'priest' respectively, have the right to administer the eucharist, whereas the deacon, who (like those in lesser orders and laymen) has no priesthood, is without the right.

Such was the practice (so far as we know it) of the primitive Church, and various motives are discernible in it. The original reason why the apostles delegated baptism to others, while the presbyter-bishops did not delegate the Holy Communion, may have been in each case a reverent desire to imitate our Lord. But as soon as a custom had developed, other considerations emerged. It became a breach of order for those who were not presbyters to assume the administration of the eucharist. This objection is explicit in the passages from I Clement and Tertullian's treatise *On Prescription*. Moreover, since to maintain order in the Church is the task of the clergy, a breach of order might well involve a sedition against the clergy and a breach of church unity. These objections are found in the passages from I Clement and Ignatius, with which one may compare the passage from Tertullian's treatise *On Baptism*. A further objection was involved in the attribution of priesthood to the clergy, which began with Tertullian and Hippolytus: for both these writers maintain, in the places indicated above, that since the eucharist is a sacrifice, the proper people to administer it are high priests and priests, that is, bishops and presbyters. But even when this development had taken place, the rule was not yet so rigid as

to admit of no exceptions. The extraordinary ministers—the prophets and teachers—whom the *Didache* permitted to administer the eucharist on occasion were probably now a thing of the past, but their place had been taken by the confessors (Christians who had suffered for their faith), declared by Hippolytus to be presbyters without the laying on of hands (*Apostolic Tradition* x, 1 f.). And according to Tertullian it was the practice, if no clergy were available, for the eucharist to be administered by laymen (*On Exhortation to Chastity*, ch. 7). Admittedly this treatise belongs to Tertullian's Montanist period, but what he here says of the eucharist bears a strong resemblance to what he says of the other sacrament in the seventeenth chapter of his treatise *On Baptism* (a work which in all probability belongs to his catholic period), and there is no hint whatever, as one might expect there to be in so polemical a writer, that the practice he speaks of is a highly controversial peculiarity of the Montanists.³²

It can now be seen that the English Reformers, in maintaining the custom that only bishops and presbyters should administer the Holy Communion, were maintaining, in its developed and strict form, a custom of extreme antiquity and perfectly innocent origin. The motives which had originally promoted the custom, such as the imitation of our Lord and the preservation of order, discipline and unity in the Church, were pure and scriptural. And though the rise of a priestly conception of the ministry had been so regrettable a development, the Reformers evidently did not consider that the custom had become so inextricably bound up with this conception, that a deliberate repudiation of the conception would be insufficient to dissociate them.

There were, indeed, several points of contact between the original motives behind the custom and the Reformers' own principles of church order, as expounded in Article 34 and the preface *Of Ceremonies* in the Prayer Book. These principles may be summed up as follows: the teaching of Scripture leaves many points of church order undetermined, and the right therefore rests with the authorities in the church of each nation to determine these matters for their own people, in a way that does not conflict with Scripture and accords with the general requirements of order and edification laid down by St. Paul in I Cor.

xiv. However, for the sake of unity and concord, and also for the sake of those weaker brethren with whom it is a great matter of conscience to depart from any ecclesiastical practice to which they have grown used, the church authorities should not change old-established customs unless the great principle of edification demands it.³³ And as for innovations by private individuals, they can only be regarded as a serious offence against order and authority in the Church. On these principles, it is easy to see why the English Reformers maintained the custom that only bishops and priests should administer the Holy Communion. For all old customs should on these principles be maintained unless they are an obstacle to edification. The Reformers' action can thus be perfectly well explained without invoking sacerdotal doctrines which they openly repudiated, and which could only have led them to change the existing custom, not to maintain it.

On the other hand, it is equally clear from these principles that when edification requires it, customs not enjoined by Scripture may be altered. Unlike the Anglican negotiators, therefore, the English Reformers would hardly have regarded it as 'a grave problem' that Methodist lay-preachers have in case of necessity been allowed, like laymen in the early Church, to administer the Holy Communion (*Report*, p. 24, paragraph 6), and certainly not when once the principle of lay-preaching has been admitted.³⁴ They agreed with Calvin that the administration of the sacraments (as seals of the gospel) is closely bound up with preaching,³⁵ and would therefore have agreed with the Methodist dissentients, who make the same point (*Report*, p. 61). They evidently also agreed with Calvin that the apostles, to whom Christ gave the commission to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments (Matt. xxviii, 16-20; Luke xxii, 19; Acts i, 8; I Cor. xi, 24 f.), in this respect primarily represented the Christian ministry.³⁶ But since they did not go all the way with Calvin, and reserve these functions exclusively for the ministry, they would doubtless have agreed once more with the Methodist dissentients (*ibid.*) that it is theologically unexceptionable, at any rate in cases of need, for laymen to preach the word,³⁷ to baptise,³⁸ or to administer the Holy Communion,³⁹ provided they are duly authorised, and so are acting in an auxiliary capacity, not usurping the office of clergymen. The

fact that they made no provision for exceptions, save the customary provision for the case of emergency baptism, only means that when the Prayer Book was drawn up there was a great deal of ignorance and illiteracy among the laity and no shortage of clergy,⁴⁰ whereas today there is a shortage, not only among the Methodists and in many overseas Anglican dioceses, but also in the Church of England.⁴¹ If, therefore, the Church of England were now to make provision for laymen, when duly qualified and authorised, to exercise in appropriate circumstances not only the ministry of baptism or of the word but also of the Holy Communion, its action would not be alien to the historic Anglican formularies, but would on the contrary be a proper development of the principles which they embody.⁴²

Yet what the *Report* proposes is quite the reverse: that, as a condition of union, Methodists should renounce lay administration of the Holy Communion, even in the exceptional circumstances in which it is now permitted (pp. 48, 55). Nothing is said about lay administration of baptism, which the Church of England allows, or about lay proclamation of the word, which the bishops now encourage: yet, by an inconsistency which the Anglican Reformers would have thought very odd, lay administration of the Holy Communion is to become entirely taboo, for Methodists as well as Anglicans. Against this inconsistency, which the negotiators' *Interim Statement* of 1958, remarkably enough, described as unjustifiable (p. 11), the Methodist dissentients quite rightly protest (*Report*, p. 61). The plea that under conditions of full communion lay administration would no longer be necessary (a pragmatic argument offered on page 55 of the *Report*, apparently as a short cut to a decision) if valid at all, is valid only for the present day. What Methodists are being asked to do is to tie their hands for the future. This would be an act of imprudence, as well as being a bad example to those overseas churches in which the shortage of clergy is acute, and (considering the sacerdotal grounds on which it is urged) an offence against the gospel.⁴³

Absolution

With regard to absolution, the authentic Anglican position is if anything still clearer. The English Reformers regarded absolution not as a sacrament and not as a rite, but as a grace in-

herent in the whole administration of the gospel—in baptism, in intercession, in the readmission of the excommunicate, and above all in the ministry of the word. The preaching of the word on the one hand leads the sinner to repentance and faith, and on the other assures him that those who repent and believe have God's forgiveness. Thus preaching both declares God's forgiveness and conveys it, and is therefore of the nature of absolution. This understanding of absolution may be found, for example, in Latimer's *Sermons* (p. 424) in his *Sermons and Remains* (p. 12 f.), in Jewel's *Apology* (*Works*, vol. 3, p. 60), in Nowell's *Catechism* (p. 176), and also in the formularies themselves—in the Homily *Of Repentance*, part 2, and in the first exhortation of the Prayer Book communion service. This was the sense in which the Reformers understood John xx, 22 f., and it was on this interpretation of the passage, according to Bishop Jewel (*Works*, vol. 3, pp. 352, 356, in the context of his whole discussion, pp. 351–85), that it maintained its place in the reformed service for the ordering of priests which we find in the Prayer Book.⁴⁴

All this does not, of course, mean that the Anglican Reformers abolished formulas of absolution. What it means is that they regarded such formulas simply as a mode of preaching, or (in the case of the absolution in the Prayer Book communion service) a mode of prayer, and not as a unique species. They reserved them normally for presbyters to pronounce, not because of any sacerdotal ideas, but partly, no doubt, because of their reluctance to alter old customs without due cause, and partly for a reason to which we shall come in a moment. The custom that only bishops and priests should absolve was not as ancient as the custom that they alone should administer the eucharist, and it had never become so strict a rule, though it was becoming such at the time of the Reformation. Formal absolutions originated in the context of the readmission of the excommunicate to the fellowship of the Church, whereby they were considered to be readmitted also to peace with God. Readmission into Christian fellowship is of course as old as excommunication, but patristic evidence for it, except of a rather tenuous kind (see Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 4: 23; Irenaeus, *Against All Heresies* 1: 13: 5, 7), dates only from the third century. In the first sixty years of that century, Tertullian, Origen

and Cyprian refer to it several times in some detail,⁴⁵ and a writer quoted by Eusebius (*Ecclesiastical History* 5: 28) once. By this time it may well have included a formal absolution, probably of a precatory kind (for precatory formulas were the prevailing type in antiquity), but formal absolutions were as yet confined to this one occasion, and the only ways in which the majority of Christians experienced absolution were through the ordinary ministry of the word and sacraments and the ordinary practice of prayer. The readmission of the excommunicate was normally performed by a bishop, but also for a time by confessors, and in cases of necessity by presbyters and deacons. After it had become normal for priests to absolve as well as bishops, and for all Christians to receive absolution, allowance for cases of necessity still continued. Well into the Middle Ages deacons were permitted to absolve when no priest was available, and it was even maintained by Albertus Magnus and admitted into medieval canon law that a layman might absolve.⁴⁶ But the general rule was that absolution should be pronounced by bishops and priests, and since it was a principle with the English Reformers not to make needless changes in existing customs, one can well understand why they maintained it.

It is probable, however, that they were influenced by another consideration also—that absolutions are primarily of the character of preaching, and preaching is normally the work of presbyters and bishops. The Prayer Book service for the ordering of deacons does not reckon preaching an integral part of a deacon's work. As a probationer for the priesthood, he is commissioned to the public reading of the Scriptures and Homilies, but he is warned that he is only to preach if specially authorised by the bishop. This then may be a further reason why the Reformers confined absolution to bishops and priests, but sacerdotal ideas cannot have influenced them at all. At the 1662 revision of the Prayer Book, the rule against the pronouncement of absolution by deacons was made somewhat more clear and strict,⁴⁷ but the theology of absolution in the Church of England remained the same, as the statements in the formularies and the writings of seventeenth-century theologians bear witness.⁴⁸

It can now be seen that the doctrine of ministerial priesthood adopted in the Report is contrary both to Scripture and to the

Anglican formularies; and to have this doctrine put forward by the Anglican representatives as the faith of the Church of England (a church which in Article 6 binds itself to the teachings of Scripture, and elsewhere repudiates sacerdotalism root and branch) is intolerable.

A true idea of the priesthood of the ministry can only be obtained by asking what functions the New Testament attributes to ministers, and whether these functions are priestly. Two spiritual sacrifices—and in consequence priestly functions—which we saw on pages 18 and 19 to be especially, though not exclusively, ministerial duties, are the ministry of the word and prayer. A ministerial duty of equal importance is pastoral oversight and government: this too is shared by others (such as parents, and older Christians in general) and this too, as being a Christian activity performed under the influence of the Spirit of God, can be reckoned a spiritual sacrifice and a function of priesthood. It is also customary, and doubtless appropriate, that the minister should represent the laity as their leader in public worship and as the ministrant of the sacraments. Here again he has no exclusive prerogative—he does not do the worshipping, but simply leads it; and if he administers the sacraments, this is not, as we saw on page 24, because the laity lack any right to do so themselves. The reason why the offering of these six or seven spiritual sacrifices pertains primarily to ministers, is that ministers, in view of special gifts and a special call, and for the sake of church order, have been set apart to offer them. If one were to speak of ministerial priesthood, therefore, two things ought to be in one's mind: first, that ministers, though they offer no unique spiritual sacrifices, offer certain particular spiritual sacrifices, and secondly, that among those who offer these particular spiritual sacrifices ministers have a special prominence, to which, in accordance with the New Testament, they have been formally commissioned by the Church. The fact remains, however, that the phrase 'ministerial priesthood' is a thoroughly misleading one, and is better avoided, unless one is referring specifically to the view of Moberly. For since the laity also have spiritual sacrifices to offer, and since (as was seen on page 19 above), along with the spiritual sacrifices which it is primarily the duty of the clergy to offer, there are others which it is primarily the duty of the laity to offer, one should never

speak of 'ministerial priesthood' or the 'ministerial priest' without also speaking of 'lay priesthood' or the 'lay priest' and making it clear that the two are absolutely on a par. Otherwise one is bound to give the impression (as Moberly, in his ultimate intention wished to give) that the ministry are priests in a sense somehow distinct from the sense in which all Christians are priests, and that, this being so, they possess a priesthood in which the laity have no share.

NOTES

¹ The latter aspect of the Biblical doctrine is worth stressing in view of the denial by K. E. Kirk (*The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 49) and T. F. Torrance (*Royal Priesthood*, p. 35) that the doctrine has such an aspect. This is an example of the way that the modern reaction against individualism in Christian thinking is getting out of hand.

² Of course, when the evangelist offers his converts, he offers that which the converts also must offer (see ch. 12, v. 1). But the sacrifice can still be thought of as his own, since he offers it as the fruit of his labours. And it is this that seems to be in St. Paul's mind.

³ On the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, see further A. R. Ryder, *The Priesthood of the Laity*; P. Davin, *Le Sacerdoce Royal des Fidèles dans les Livres Saints*; T. W. Manson, *Ministry and Priesthood: Christ's and Ours*, lect. 2; and C. Eastwood, *The Royal Priesthood of the Faithful*.

⁴ One is sorry to see that the statement *Ordination in the Methodist Church*, adopted by the Methodist Conference of 1960, also uses this misleading language (*Ministry, Baptism and Membership in the Methodist Church*, p. 16). R. C. Moberly defends such language on the further grounds that Christ is a Priest and the Church is His body (*Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 251). But this is an arbitrary extension of the metaphor of the mystical body such as is only too common today. We shall have occasion to criticise this sort of argument more thoroughly in ch. 6, when we come to examine the similar contention that since the Church is Christ's body, the Church's self-offering is identical with His.

⁵ The one passage which is sometimes supposed to attribute a special priesthood to the clergy is Rom. xv, 16 f. Actually it does nothing of the kind. The priesthood which St. Paul here claims is the same figurative priesthood as is exercised by the laity. His priestly work is not the Holy Communion or absolution but evangelism—work in which the laity has a share (Acts xi, 19–21, etc.). The sacrifice he offers is not the body and blood of Christ but his converts—a sacrifice which makes no atonement, and which the converts themselves join in offering (ch. 12, v. 1). On this passage, see also note 2, above.

⁶ How far Wesley's own teaching on the subject is reconcilable with the Deed of Union will be discussed in ch. 5, but it should be noted at once that this teaching of his is not to be found in those of his writings which the Methodist Church has accepted as doctrinal standards.

⁷ Canons and Decrees of Trent, session 22, ch. 1 and canon 2.

⁸ See especially T. T. Carter, *The Doctrine of the Priesthood in the Church of England*.

⁹ Canons and Decrees of Trent, session 23, ch. 1 and canon 1.

¹⁰ *Ministerial Priesthood*, esp. pp. 286–8. The other activities of the ministry—pastoral care, teaching, etc.—Moberly subsumes under the inward disposition of self-sacrifice which finds its outward expression in the eucharistic sacrifice (*op. cit.*, pp. 283–94). But this is clearly absurd. Pastoral care and teaching have their own outward expression, far more characteristic than

the eucharistic sacrifice. Admittedly their outward expression is not obviously or ritually sacrificial, but in the eyes of the New Testament writers (it should be emphasised) spiritual sacrifices do not need an outward expression of this kind, nor does the eucharist supply one.

¹¹ The fact that the only priesthood recognised by the New Testament as exercised by men in this life is the priesthood of believers, sufficiently answers the objection raised by W. J. Sparrow Simpson (*The Celebrant of the Eucharist*, p. 46) and P. Dabin (*op. cit.*, p. 130) among others, that if the priesthood of all Israelites did not prevent the line of Aaron from possessing a unique priesthood, no more does the priesthood of all Christians prevent the clergy from doing so. Let it be granted that the priesthood of all believers does not in itself exclude a unique ministerial priesthood, yet coupled with the silence of the New Testament as to any other priesthood it does. The operative principle is the sufficiency of Scripture, and on this principle the ascription of a unique priesthood to the clergy is not only an error but a derogation from the priestly rights of the laity. If we confine our attention to Scripture, what we see is the priesthood of Israelites continued in the priesthood of Christians, and the priesthood of the line of Aaron replaced by the heavenly priesthood of Christ.

¹² Moberly's contention that the norm of priesthood is not the Old Testament priest but our Lord (*Ministerial Priesthood*, pp. 240 f., 243 f., 250) can be accepted only if it is understood that our Lord is much else besides a Priest. His priestly functions are those that fulfil the typical functions of Old Testament priests (see the Epistle to the Hebrews), and His practice of forgiving sins is not among them.

¹³ On absolution, see p. 40, note 44, below. On the eucharistic sacrifice, see ch. 6.

¹⁴ The idea that the administration of Holy Communion and the pronouncement of absolution are the main priestly functions of the clergy reappears on p. 48 of the *Report*. 'Assurance will be required', we read, 'that the specific functions of a priest within the Church of God would be safeguarded in practice, by confining the celebration of the Eucharist to bishops and priests, and by acknowledging as part of the priestly and ministerial office the declaring the absolution and remission of their sins to penitent sinners.'

¹⁵ This phrase is not original to Moberly (it is used, for example, in T. T. Carter's book, *The Doctrine of the Priesthood in the Church of England*) but Moberly, by entitling his influential work *Ministerial Priesthood*, made it peculiarly his own.

¹⁶ The author does not mean to deny that the administration of Holy Communion and the pronouncement of absolution should (at any rate normally) be performed by ministers; but only that they should be performed by ministers because they are priestly functions.

¹⁷ See also p. 50 of the *Report*.

¹⁸ It may, of course, be that the phrase 'with the authority of the Church' is indeed to be regarded as pure nonsense. It would be nonsense of the same kind as that contained in the following sentence, where it is implied that, in absolving the laity, the ministry act as the laity's representatives. But if these words are to be ignored as meaningless, the sacerdotalism of the passage stands out even more strongly.

¹⁹ So also on p. 48 of the *Report*.

²⁰ The word 'ministry', unlike the word 'priesthood', speaks of public office in the Church, such as is possessed by some Christians only. The

statement *Ordination in the Methodist Church*, adopted by the Methodist Conference of 1960, makes the same point in this connection (*Ministry, Baptism and Membership in the Methodist Church*, p. 16). What the statement has to say on the whole question of the priesthood of the ministry (*op. cit.*, pp. 10 f., 16) is simply derived from the teaching of the Deed of Union, and since the Methodist Conference has authority under the Deed of Union to interpret the doctrine of the Methodist Church, the conflict between the *Report* and this statement is possibly as serious as the conflict between the *Report* and the Deed of Union itself.

²¹ The Medieval services of the Sarum use which formed the basis of the Prayer Book ordinal and communion service should be studied in W. Massell, *Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicanae*; J. Wickham Legg, *The Sarum Missal*; and W. H. Frere, *The Use of Sarum*.

²² The authority of the Book of Homilies (or, to speak more accurately, the two books of Homilies) rests upon the 39 Articles (Articles 11 and 35), the Prayer Book (rubric in the communion service and question in the service for the ordering of deacons) and the 1603 Canons (Canons 46, 49 and 80).

²³ On the meaning of Article 31, and on the teaching of the Anglican formularies in general, see N. Dimock's '*Dangerous Deceits*': an examination of the teaching of our Article 31, his *Christian Doctrine of Sacerdotium*, and F. Clark's *Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Reformation*.

²⁴ Conformably with this, in the subscriptions by the four houses of Convocation at the end of the original MS. of the 1662 Prayer Book (part of the book, as appended to the Act of Uniformity), the word 'priests' from the title of the book is on each occasion translated 'presbyteros'. For further evidence of the opinions of the English reformers, see N. Dimock, *Missarum Sacrificia*, and the three works mentioned in note 23 above.

²⁵ For a large collection of testimonies from Anglican divines of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries against sacerdotalism and the sacrifice of the mass, see N. Dimock's *Missarum Sacrificia*. On seventeenth-century teaching concerning priesthood and sacrifice we shall have more to say in ch. 5.

²⁶ That the Laudian party was not, as is often supposed, the predominant influence in the 1662 revision, see G. J. Cuming's lecture in A. M. Ramsey and others, *The English Prayer Book 1549-1662*. The few changes that have been made in the Prayer Book since 1662 are entirely irrelevant to our subject, while the Articles have been kept unaltered since before the rise of Laud. Parliament has recently legalised the eucharistic vestments and stone communion tables in accordance with the proposed new body of canons, but these changes, however inexpedient, cannot in the light of the Prayer Book, Articles and Homilies be held to imply a return to unreformed doctrine. Changes in the formularies which have merely been proposed, such as those contained in the 1928 Deposited Prayer Book, are here ignored.

²⁷ 'Administer' in this discussion means 'lead the service' not 'present the sacrament to the communicants'. The Prayer Book permits the latter to be performed by deacons, as in the early Church.

²⁸ See W. L. Dale, *The Law of the Parish Church*, p. 36. The issue came before the courts in at least four cases: the judgment in the case of *Escott v. Mastin* is reproduced in G. C. Brodrick and W. H. Fremantle, *Ecclesiastical Cases relating to Doctrine and Discipline*.

²⁹ Thus, in I Cor. x, 16 f., those who 'partake' are also said to 'bless'

and 'break'; and in I Cor. xi, 25, those who 'drink' are commanded also to 'do this' (that is, to do what Christ did in administering the sacrament). Hence the administration of the sacrament belongs to the whole Church, and those who actually administer can only do so as the Church's delegates, not by any personal and exclusive right. Compare also the background of the eucharist in the Passover meal, where the normal president was a layman (the head of the household).

³⁰ On the early history of the practice, see J. Bingham, *A Scholastical History of Baptism by Laymen*, and D. Waterland, *Letters on Lay-Baptism*.

³¹ That the scribes or teachers of the Law, though often distinguished from the other elders, were themselves elders, see Luke xxii, 66.

³² It is also worth noting that in the fourth century and for some time thereafter cases are mentioned (by no means always with disapproval) of the consecration of the sacrament by deacons—see J. Jewel, *Works*, vol. 1, p. 240; F. E. Brightman in H. B. Swete (ed.), *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry*, p. 396. On the minister of the sacraments in the early Church, see further F. E. Brightman in H. B. Swete (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 380-408.

³³ The explanation of this concern for concord among Christians and for the scruples of the weaker brethren is also to be found in Scripture, of course. For the former case see Mark ix, 50, Rom. xii, 16, II Cor. xiii, 11, etc., and for the latter Rom. xiv-xv and I Cor. viii-x.

³⁴ Wesley himself disapproved of lay-preachers administering the sacraments and forbade them to do so (see J. C. Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, chs. 6 and 11; J. R. Parris, *John Wesley's Doctrine of the Sacraments*, pp. 76-81; and A. B. Lawson, *John Wesley and the Christian Ministry*, pp. 83-95), but in view of the subsequent development of Methodism this is mainly of historical interest. See also ch. 5, and on modern Methodist practice the Deed of Union, clause 34, and *Ministry, Baptism and Membership in the Methodist Church*, pp. 16-18, 26.

³⁵ The first Anglican to state this in so many words was perhaps Dean Nowell (*A Catechism*, p. 217), but the idea of the sacraments as confirmatory signs and seals is already present in Articles 25 and 27, and the Prayer Book ordinal deliberately combines the ministry of the word and the ministry of the sacraments as being alike functions of the bishop, the priest, and the deacon.

³⁶ This argument also is used by Dean Nowell, at the place indicated in the previous note, and is common among the opponents of lay-baptism. But there is higher authority for it, since the passage Matt. xxviii, 18-20 was until 1662 the gospel in the Prayer Book service for the ordering of priests. (It is now an alternative gospel in the service for the consecrating of bishops.)

³⁷⁻³⁹ See the Appendix on pp. 42-6.

⁴⁰ Neither when the Prayer Book was first compiled, in 1549, nor when the two thoroughgoing revisions took place, in 1552 and 1662, does there seem to have been any shortage of clergy. At the beginning of the Reformation period, according to P. Hughes, there were 10,000 to 12,000 secular clergy (*The Reformation in England*, vol. 1, p. 83), and to judge by the vast size of the cathedral staffs and the large staffs of some other churches (for which see also C. Wordsworth, *Notes on Mediaeval Services in England*, pp. 83-8) this was quite an adequate number. 'The great want of ministers' mentioned by Archbishop Parker at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign (*Correspondence*, p. 120) may have been due to the large numbers who had so recently gone into exile or been deprived under Mary. According to the

estimate quoted by Parker (doubtless an overestimate), of about 16,000 clergy, 12,000 were deprived by Mary because they had wives (*A Defence of Priestly Mariages*, p. 6). The lack of clergy at the beginning of the Commonwealth period, caused by the ejection of about 3,000 to 3,500 Royalist ministers, though it still persisted in some places up to the time of the Restoration, had probably been largely made up by then, since Baxter, at the Savoy Conference, would not agree that there ever had been a deficiency (see G. B. Tatham, *The Puritans in Power*, pp. 52 f., 88-92, 245 f.; R. S. Bosher, *The Making of the Restoration Settlement*, p. 232 f.). Moreover, there were now the returned Royalist clergy as well, and until the Great Ejection there must have been a superfluity rather than a lack. Even after the Great Ejection there was still no shortage, if one may judge from the superfluity that seems to have existed in the period 1670-80: see J. H. Overton, *Life in the English Church (1660-1714)*, p. 297 f. The one occasion when one might have expected provision for lay assistance to be made was at the introduction of the 1603 Canons. There were then, according to the returns, 9,244 clergy in the two provinces, and owing to the scanty income of benefices there were a great many pluralities (see R. G. Usher, *The Reconstruction of the English Church*, vol. 1, pp. 205-43). But it would have been extremely inopportune if provision had been made either in the 1603 Canons or in the 1662 Prayer Book for a more active lay participation in worship, since the Puritan party was strongly pressing at both periods for active lay participation to be reduced, and in 1603 at any rate they had sympathisers in high places (see the Millenary Petition and the records of the Hampton Court and Savoy Conferences, in E. Cardwell, *A History of Conferences connected with the Book of Common Prayer*).

⁴¹ It is now better appreciated than it seems to have been in the period when the formularies were taking shape that lay participation in ministering the word and leading public prayer is on Biblical principles desirable even when there is no shortage of clergy. (For this growth in understanding, the witness of Methodists is partly responsible.) The New Testament supplies examples of lay participation in both (I Cor. xiv, 26; I Tim. ii, 8, etc.), together with a warning not to quench the Spirit (I Thess. v, 19), which we disregard if we make no provision for any but ordained clergymen to exercise gifts which the Spirit distributes as He will (I Cor. xii, 11). It does not seem to follow, however, that laymen must on theological grounds be permitted to lead public prayer at every sort of service, including the Holy Communion; and in normal circumstances (for here Thorndike's argument, stated in the appendix to this chapter, seems to have some weight) it is probably better that they should not do so; though in special circumstances and on practical grounds (shortage of clergy) it is desirable that they sometimes should.

⁴² An alternative course would be to lower the standards of learning for the clergy and to relax the requirement that ministerial work should be a full-time occupation. The lay-preacher could then be ordained. But it is not clear to the present writer that this would be preferable either on theological or on practical grounds.

⁴³ This proposal is contrary not only to the 1958 *Interim Statement* (see above), but also to the report *Church Relations in England*, produced in 1950 as the result of some preliminary negotiations, and mentioned on p. 7 of the present report. It is there stated that lay administration of the Holy Communion 'would obviously require full and careful examination in any further negotiations between the Church of England and individual Free

Churches' (p. 41), and that if any of the Free Churches were to give up this practice, they would not be assenting to 'a view of the office and authority of the ordained ministry, which would involve an infringement of the unique High Priesthood of the risen Christ or of the priestly character of the whole Christian Body', since 'none of the Communion engaged in these negotiations desired to put forward or to defend such a view' (p. 42). How seriously these agreed statements have been taken in the present report, anyone who has read it can see. The practice receives only cursory treatment, and the proposal that Methodists should change their custom in the matter is based on distinctly sacerdotal grounds. (Incidentally, an *Interim Report*, of which the present writer has not been able to obtain a sight, preceded the report *Church Relations in England*, and is not to be confused with the *Interim Statement*, which appeared nine years later.)

⁴⁴ Prior to 1662, the passage was an alternative gospel in the ordering of priests, as it is now in the consecrating of bishops; but, both before 1662 and since, its words have had a place in the ordering of priests, as they accompany the laying on of hands in the service. The only plausible argument from Scripture for the Roman Catholic doctrine of absolution is based on this passage. A little reflection, however, greatly diminishes the plausibility of the argument. Even though others were present on this occasion (see Luke xxiv, 33), the words of v. 21, suggest that our Lord is primarily addressing the apostles. It is therefore of crucial importance to investigate the way in which the apostles understood the commission, and more particularly to inquire, Whose sins did the apostles in fact remit or retain? and, How did the apostles remit or retain them? The answer to the first of these questions, if we may judge by the apostles' writings and the rest of the New Testament, is that their understanding of the will of God would not have allowed them to remit the sins of any except believers or to retain the sins of any except unbelievers. The answer to the second question, if we may judge in the same way, is that the apostles cannot have remitted or retained sins through the confessional, of which there is no evidence until centuries later, nor, except in relatively few cases, through the readmission or continued exclusion of the excommunicate: the latter may have a certain relevance, and so may baptism, though normally the apostles seem not to have baptised in person (Acts x, 48, I Cor. i, 14-17), but the passage gives the impression that it is speaking of something more central to the apostles' ministry, and its primary reference can hardly be to anything other than their preaching, with which their prayers are perhaps linked (see Acts vi, 4). The apostles preached salvation to those who should repent and believe, judgment to those who should refuse to do so—a message which occasioned repentance and faith in some, impenitence and unbelief in others. Thus, by their preaching, they not only declared but brought about the remission and retention of sins, and in this sense actually remitted and retained them.

⁴⁵ For references, and for further information on absolution in the early Church, see F. E. Brightman in H. B. Swete (ed.), *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry*, essay 6, and O. D. Watkins, *A History of Penance*. The latter work and R. C. Mortimer's work *The Origins of Private Penance in the Western Church* carry the history of the practice down to a later period.

⁴⁶ See J. Jewel, *Works*, vol. 3, p. 357; J. Pohle and A. Preuss, *The Sacraments*, vol. 3, pp. 123-5.

⁴⁷ The terms *minister* and *priest* are on the whole used indiscriminately in the Prayer Book, and prior to 1662 *minister* was used in the rubric relating

to the absolution in Morning and Evening Prayer, but *priest* at the corresponding place in Holy Communion and the Visitation of the Sick. In 1662 *minister* was changed to *priest* in the first case, and *priest* was also used in the Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea, then added to the book. This new measure of uniformity is significant in view of the discussions at the Savoy Conference, which immediately preceded the 1662 revision—see C. Wheatly, *A Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 119–21, and, for the evidence, E. Cardwell, *A History of Conferences connected with the Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 307 f., 342.

⁴⁸ Among those who may be instanced as maintaining the Reformers' conception of absolution in the mid-seventeenth century are Henry Hammond (*Of the Power of the Keyes*, esp. pp. 125–30), Jeremy Taylor (*Unum Necessarium* 10: 4; *A Dissuasive from Popery* 2: 1: 11), Hamon L'Estrange (*The Alliance of Divine Offices*, p. 448 f.) and Isaac Barrow (*De Potestate Clavium*). The only real change that took place in the seventeenth century was a change of emphasis with regard to the use of confession and absolution in private: previously the stress had been on the general prohibition, but now, with the threat of Roman Catholicism for a time removed, it was possible to stress the particular exceptions. However, this change of emphasis regarding practice implied no change of doctrine, and only in a very few writers is a change of doctrine found. The earliest case of a real distinction being drawn between absolution and the ministry of the word is in a sermon on John xx, 23, preached by Lancelot Andrewes in 1600 (*Ninety-six Sermons*, vol. 5, pp. 82–103), and there is contemporary evidence of the stir caused by this 'strange' teaching (see his *Minor Works*, p. lxii). In 1637 Anthony Sparrow preached a sermon on similar lines (*A Sermon concerning Confession of Sinnes, and the Power of Absolution*), for which he was summoned before the vice-chancellor of his university and required to give an explanation. Sparrow repeated this teaching twenty years later in his book *A Rationale upon the Book of Common Prayer* (pp. 14–22), but even after the turn of the century, when Charles Wheatly espoused the same view, he still had to defend it as somewhat novel and eccentric (*A Rationale Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer*, pp. vii–x, 114–21); while the Nonjurors Roger Laurence and Thomas Brett, who took up this view soon after Wheatly and linked it with an exclusive theory of episcopacy (see Laurence's *Sacerdotal Powers: or, the Necessity of Confession, Penance, and Absolution*, and Brett's *A Sermon on Remission of Sins* and *The Doctrine of Remission of Sins, and the Power of Absolution*), only succeeded in evoking a denunciation of Brett's sermon in Convocation and a counterblast in writing from the learned Joseph Bingham, who reasserted the historic Anglican doctrine, fortifying it with abundant testimonies from the Fathers (*Two Sermons and Two Letters concerning the Nature and Necessity of the several sorts of Absolution*). It is therefore remarkable that the Methodist writer A. B. Lawson, in his recent book, supposes Wesley to have deviated from Anglican teaching in that he rejected the Roman Catholic conception of absolution (*John Wesley and the Christian Ministry*, p. 92). The truth is, Wesley was simply maintaining the traditional Anglican standpoint. (On Wesley's attitude to the forms of absolution in the Prayer Book, see J. E. Rattenbury, *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, p. 90 f. Though not entirely accurate, it gives what is no doubt a right idea of Wesley's views.)

Appendix to Chapter Two: Anglican Teaching on Laymen as Ministers of Word and Sacraments from the Reformation to 1662

With regard to lay-preaching, the great question at issue in the period when the formularies were being composed and brought to their present shape was whether a layman might preach if he had not been authorised to do so, and this Anglicans denied. The more theoretical question whether he might preach if he *had* been authorised, or when there was special need, is answered by those who treat of it in the affirmative. Thus Archbishop Cranmer, in an early document, maintains that lay-preaching is needed in unusual exigencies (*Miscellaneous Writings and Letters*, p. 117). Archbishop Whitgift records, with evident approval, that it was permitted under certain circumstances in the early Church (*Works*, vol. 1, pp. 452-4; vol. 2, p. 531). Herbert Thorndike maintains that laymen may preach if they have received due authorisation (*Theological Works*, vol. 1, pp. 390-2, 473, 778, 863 f.; vol. 4, p. 901). John Forbes of Corse teaches that, though preaching should normally be confined to ministers, lay-preaching is useful in cases of need (*Instructiones Historico-Theologicae* 10: 13: 9 and 16: 6: 21 f.). And Archbishop Bramhall asserts that, though preaching is normally the work of ministers, yet in cases of need laymen may, and indeed must, give instruction (*Works*, vol. 3, p. 167). It ought to be mentioned that Forbes, as a Scottish episcopalian, was not committed to the English formularies, and that his teaching is in consequence not necessarily so representative as that of the English and Irish writers.

Perhaps the only representative divine of the period who takes the opposite view is William Whitaker, who holds that Matt. xxviii, 19 f., though it does not exclude laymen from teaching in private, excludes them from preaching in public, as much as from baptising (*Praelectiones de Sacramentis*, p. 259). One would have expected others also among the opponents of lay-baptism to draw this conclusion.

In the case of lay-baptism there was more difference of opinion than in that of lay-preaching. Lay-baptism was actually authorised in the Church of England, following ancient custom, by the private baptism service for infants in danger of death, as it appeared in the Prayer Books of 1549, 1552 and 1559. In

practice the rite was often performed by women, which those who had no objection in such emergencies to lay-baptism as such were not always happy about. However, throughout the period when the formularies were taking shape, a strong tradition of divines maintained that, since baptism is generally necessary to salvation, baptism by a layman, when no minister is available, accords with the will of God. Among the representatives of this tradition were Archbishop Cranmer (*Miscellaneous Writings and Letters*, p. 46), Archbishop Whitgift (*Works*, vol. 2, pp. 527 f., 539 f.), Richard Hooker (*Ecclesiastical Polity* 5: 61: 3 to 5: 62: 3), Bishops Bancroft and Bilson (at the Hampton Court Conference—see E. Cardwell, *A History of Conferences connected with the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 175 f.), Dean Jackson (*Works*, vol. 12, p. 148 f.), Herbert Thorndike (*Theological Works*, vol. 1, p. 473 f.; vol. 5, p. 196) and Anthony Sparrow (*A Rationale upon the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 242).

On the other hand, influenced partly by Calvin's doctrine of the ministry, partly by the teaching of certain early Fathers, many opponents of lay-baptism appeared in Elizabeth's reign, and opposition continued throughout in question and well beyond it. Thus, according to the Canterbury Convocation of 1576 (see E. Grindal, *Remains*, p. 188 f.), Thomas Rogers (*The Catholic Doctrine of the Church of England*, pp. 234-6), William Whitaker (*Praelectiones de Sacramentis*, De Baptismo, qu. 3), the predominant school of thought at the Hampton Court Conference (see the records of the conference in E. Cardwell, *A History of Conferences connected with the Book of Common Prayer*) and Jeremy Taylor (*Ductor Dubitantium* 3: 4: 15: 2), among others (for references to further writers see J. Bingham, *A Scholastical History of Baptism by Laymen* 1: 3: 5), lay-baptism is contrary to the will of God; while according to the Puritan party, with whom John Forbes of Corse (*Instructiones Historico-Theologicae* 10: 13, 14) agreed, it is not only unlawful but invalid. These views, as might be expected, were often linked with a tendency to play down the general necessity of the sacraments to salvation. In the eighteenth century attention was turned to the question of baptism by dissenters, which the Nonjurors regarded as lay-baptism, because the dissenters lacked episcopal ordination; and the matter continued to be debated until the nineteenth century, when it was ruled in a series of legal judg-

ments that according to Anglican teaching lay-baptism in emergencies is both valid and proper. From that time opposition to the practice seems to have died away.

The decisions of the courts turned mainly upon the alterations to the Prayer Book service of private baptism, which were made in 1604 and mostly confirmed in 1662: were these alterations intended to prohibit laymen from officiating at the service, or merely to express a clear preference for a clergyman, as being the norm (the earlier Prayer Books having given no direction on this point)? King James I, who was mainly responsible for the changes, stated that baptism by laymen or by women was not prohibited, any more than it was authorised, by the 1604 service (see J. Bingham, *Origines Ecclesiasticae and other works*, vol. 8, p. 121 f.), and the courts, no doubt rightly, judged this to be the true interpretation.

Unfortunately, almost all Anglican writers of the period when the formularies were being composed and brought to their present shape ignore the question of lay administration of the eucharist. This is presumably because, unlike lay-preaching and lay-baptism, it was not a pressing problem: according to Herbert Thorndike (*Theological Works*, vol. 4, p. 899 f.), even under the Commonwealth, when a free rein was given to lay-preaching (see esp. G. F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, ch. 5), laymen still hesitated to administer the eucharist, though certain writers among the Baptists and Independents maintained in theory their right to do so (see G. F. Nuttall, *op. cit.*, p. 97 f.). One has, therefore, to infer the attitude which Anglican writers of the classical period would have taken to lay administration of the eucharist, from the attitude which they actually took to lay-baptism and lay-preaching; and since, as we saw on p. 29 and note, they regarded the ministry of the word and that of the two sacraments as closely bound up together, and were, generally speaking, entirely free from those sacerdotal conceptions which put the ministry of the eucharist in a class by itself, the inference is a safe one.

It is true, there are certain writers who deny that laymen may in any circumstances administer either sacrament, among whom are Thomas Rogers (*The Catholic Doctrine of the Church of England*, pp. 234-6), William Whitaker (*Praelectiones de Sacra-*

mentis, De Baptismo, qu. 3, De Eucharistia, qu. 6), John Forbes (*Instructiones Historico-Theologicae* 10: 13, 14, esp. 10: 13: 9) and the Puritan party. But these writers are very far from being sacerdotalists. They have no greater objection to lay administration of the eucharist than they have to lay-baptism. The former, according to Rogers (*op. cit.*, p. 234), though not lawful, would no less than the latter be valid. And the great argument which these writers use against the former is the same argument which they use against the latter, that is, the general argument against lay administration of the sacraments propounded by Calvin.

Calvin's argument is based upon the premiss that it was the apostles to whom Christ gave the commission to administer the sacraments, and he holds that in this respect the apostles simply represented the Christian ministry, and not even secondarily the Church as a whole. Now, the main stream of Anglican writers are unconvinced by this argument, since they reject it in the case of lay-baptism, and also in the case of lay-preaching (to which, by parity of reasoning, it applies equally). The obvious conclusion to draw is that, had they been faced with the theoretical question whether it is agreeable to the will of God for a deacon or layman, duly authorised, in case of necessity to administer the eucharist, they would here also have rejected Calvin's argument against it. And the only doubt remaining is, what they would have regarded as a case of necessity.

Before leaving this subject, it ought to be mentioned that there is one seventeenth-century writer, Herbert Thorndike, who though he regards lay-baptism and lay-preaching as in suitable circumstances permissible, asserts with great emphasis that in the administration of the eucharist by deacons or laymen is not (*Theological Works*, vol. 5, pp. 15, 425, 431, etc.). His reason for this, apart from the custom of the Church, is that the administration of the eucharist ought always to remain in the same hands as the power of church discipline, whereby men are excluded from the eucharist and readmitted to it—that is to say, in the hands of the presbyters (*Theological Works*, vol. 1, pp. 467 f., 480, 683 f.; vol. 4, p. 481). This consideration may conceivably have helped to confirm the 1662 revisers in their conservative policy, but it is not likely, seeing that Thorndike

was an eccentric thinker, and his argument is more specious than convincing. For a layman who has knowledge, discretion and probity enough to be a satisfactory preacher is surely qualified to exercise church discipline also; and in the exceptional circumstances where lay administration of the eucharist would be most needed, lay exercise of discipline would be needed as well. It is still less likely that the 1662 revisers were at all influenced by the fact that the eucharist was widely regarded in the seventeenth century as a figurative offering of Christ's sacrifice, and its minister in consequence as a figurative priest (see ch. 5). For the consequence would still hold if its minister was a deacon or layman.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SACRAMENTS

WE pass on now to the fourth chapter of the *Report*, and the subject of the sacraments, which is treated at much greater length. The chapter begins with a few general remarks (p. 28), which do not call for comment, except as importing the notion of 'intention' from Roman Catholic theology. This is regrettable in a report supposed to represent Anglican and Methodist teaching, especially as the doctrine of intention is one of the most mischievous products of sacerdotalism, and asserts that an unsuitable purpose on the part of the minister, even if completely secret, is sufficient to make of none effect a sacrament which lacks nothing either in its outward form or in the faith of its recipients.¹ The chapter continues with a brief account of the documents in which the Anglican doctrine of the sacraments may be found (p. 28), and concludes with an extended statement of Methodist teaching on the subject (pp. 29-33).

The Teaching of the Church of England

Why the Anglican negotiators do not, as on other themes, attempt to expound Anglican teaching, but merely refer to the documents which contain it, is not clear. In view of the fact that so much ingenuity has been devoted by so many writers since the beginning of the Oxford Movement to the extraction from the Anglican formularies of some other meaning than the natural and historic one, it is important that on the sacraments, as on other subjects, their original and intended meaning should be reaffirmed. This meaning is not, in fact, difficult to find. The language of the Thirty-nine Articles, though restrained, is not obscure. Considerable pains were taken in 1552 to free the language of the communion service from the ambiguities discovered there by those still devoted to the old religion. The section of the catechism which deals with the sacraments is

explicit, and can be further illustrated from the fuller catechisms by Alexander Nowell on which it is based. Any serious doubt that may remain about the meaning of the Prayer Book and Articles is dispelled by the writings and opinions of the Anglican divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (the centuries in which the formularies took shape),² including the extensive writings of Cranmer, by whom the Prayer Book and Articles were mainly composed. The apparent meaning of the formularies is thus thoroughly established as the true meaning, and the Church of England is seen to repudiate Roman Catholic and, in as far as it is distinctive, Lutheran teaching on the sacraments (and so by consequence the kindred Anglo-Catholic teaching of more recent times), and to stand in the broad tradition stemming from the Reformers of Geneva, Strassburg and Zürich. These conclusions are still further confirmed by the two relevant sermons in the Book of Homilies (a formulary not mentioned in the *Report*).

Before leaving the matter of the Anglican formularies, the *Report* speaks briefly of Prayer Book revision and current Anglican teaching on the sacraments, and gives the impression that no change in the doctrine of the formularies is involved. Methodists should be on their guard here. Many of the common deviations from the Prayer Book, including some 'formally' (and unconstitutionally!) 'recognised' by bishops, are a deliberate reversion to sacramental theology of the Roman Catholic type. And the documents mentioned as examples of current Anglican teaching, i.e. the report of the 1958 Lambeth Conference (which incidentally was not produced by members of the Church of England, and is not, one hopes, representative of their sacramental views³), the report *Doctrine in the Church of England*, and the proposed revision of the catechism, all conflict with the sacramental teaching of the Anglican formularies, the first two pretty radically. Hence, if Methodists were to judge the doctrine of the Anglican formularies from these documents, or conversely to confine their attention to the formularies, on the presumption that the whole Church of England still adheres to the teaching found there, they would be making a great mistake, and (so far as the sacraments are concerned) quite misconceiving the issues involved in union.

The Methodist Statement

That Methodists *have* misconceived these issues, is suggested by the Methodist statement on the sacraments which occupies the remainder of the chapter we are considering, and which will therefore be our subject for the remainder of this book. The authors of the Statement introduce it by saying that they believe it is 'one which will be received by Anglicans with understanding and appreciation, as indicating that there is sufficient doctrinal basis for closer relations in the sacramental life of the two Churches' (*Report*, p. 29).⁴ The full significance of this naïve aspiration (one hopes that such a description is not discourteous) only becomes apparent in the sequel. For the statement on the sacraments that follows is not what one would expect from a church which stems from John Wesley and which still, in its Deed of Union, acknowledges John Wesley as its great norm of orthodoxy. The authors seem rather to have attempted to work up historic Methodist teaching into something as much like Anglo-Catholicism as they can.⁵ It is no doubt for this reason that they feel bound to express some doubt whether their statement will be acceptable to all Methodists (*Report*, p. 29), and they have probably now learned, from reactions in the Church of England, that it is by no means acceptable to all Anglicans either. Why they have taken the course they have one can only speculate, but the reason which suggests itself is that they are under the misapprehension that the nearer they get to the views embraced by Anglo-Catholics, the nearer they will get to the teaching of the Church of England. Whereas the reverse is in fact the case. The nearer they get to Anglo-Catholicism, the further they stray from the official teaching of the Church of England, expressed in its authorised formularies. Admittedly, those who favour Tractarian novelties have constantly misinterpreted the teaching of the formularies, and are deeply involved in the present attempt to get it changed. But one can hardly suppose that the authors of the Methodist Statement are so unwise as to be banking on the success of the attempt. Nor is it easy to believe, despite their Statement, that they would be so disloyal to the Evangelical heritage which the Methodist Church and the Church of England have in common, as to be

willing to fall in with changes which would tend to undo the Reformation.

The general remarks on the sacraments with which the Methodist Statement begins (*Report*, p. 29) do not call for criticism, but are on the contrary true and important: it is the sections dealing with the sacraments individually that are so unsatisfactory. The Statement does not attempt a full doctrine *De Sacramentis in Genere*, and this is no place to make a bid at supplying the lack. But it is perhaps not improper to remark that we can expect little progress in the understanding of either sacrament until the attempt is once more made. Owing to the fact that the New Testament never explicitly relates baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to the disintegrating effect which Liberalism has unfortunately had upon the interpretation of Scripture, there is a reluctance today to see any necessary connection between one sacrament and the other. Yet they have sufficient in common—both being rites, both symbols, both instituted by Christ, both linked by the New Testament with Christ's saving work, both brought together, by implication, in at least one place in the New Testament (I Cor. x, 1-11), and, above all, both instituted against the background of the well-integrated and intelligible system of symbolical rites that we find in the Old Testament—for certain general principles to be laid down. These would greatly assist the understanding of the individual sacraments, by bringing out truths about each which are not explicitly stated because one is expected to infer them. When theologians return to this task of drawing out general principles of sacramental doctrine, one can hope by God's goodness to see the foundation laid for an agreed theology of the sacraments. In the meantime, any expectation of such an agreed theology is quite chimerical, and the Methodist Statement is one more piece of evidence to confirm the fact.

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¹ Unless the *Report* is referring to Catharinus's notion of 'exterior intention' (intention merely to perform the outward rite) adopted in the report *Doctrine in the Church of England* (p. 135 f.). But this is not really a doctrine of intention at all. The theory only refrains from formally rejecting the doctrine of intention, while evading all that is significant in it, and is therefore rejected as inadequate (if *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* is to be believed) by 'most modern theologians'.

² There is here abundant evidence, which has been collected and analysed in C. S. Carter's *Anglican 'Via Media'* and in various works by William Goode (*The Effects of Baptism, The Nature of Christ's Presence in the Eucharist*, etc.) and Nathaniel Dimock (*The Doctrine of the Sacraments, The Doctrine of the English Church concerning the Eucharistic Presence, The History of the Book of Common Prayer in its bearing on Present Eucharistic Controversies*, etc.).

³ On the teaching of the 1958 Lambeth report, see J. I. Packer, *Eucharistic Sacrifice*, pp. 1-21. It has to be realised that the Lambeth Conference is a meeting of bishops only, and that none of the participating churches of the Anglican Communion has a majority vote or a power of veto. The Conference has therefore always denied any intention to legislate, either on doctrine or discipline, for the participating churches, though its resolutions are naturally treated with respect. In the present instance, it is not even a majority resolution that is in question, but merely a committee report which the Conference recommended for study.

⁴ Strictly speaking, this passage is written in the name of the Anglican negotiators as well, but the paragraph in which it comes is concerned with points on which Methodists have more right to speak than Anglicans.

⁵ The fact that the Methodist Sacramental Fellowship has publicly signified its support for the proposals (see *Church Times*, 15 May 1964) is an indication of the ethos of the Methodist Statement. So is the remark by E. W. Kemp (one of the Anglican negotiators, and a distinguished Anglo-Catholic) that the Methodist Statement 'has been welcomed by many Anglicans as a fine expression of what they themselves believe' (*The Anglican-Methodist Conversations: a Comment from Within*, p. 20 f.).

CHAPTER FOUR

BAPTISM

THE section of the Methodist Statement which concerns baptism (*Report*, p. 30 f.) commences with the question of its dominical institution. The Statement here shows an unfortunate measure of agnosticism, basing its acceptance of the fact rather on rational inference than on the records in the gospels. This, of course, is a reflection of the fact that the legacy of nineteenth-century Liberal scepticism is still with us. There follows an analysis of the New Testament doctrine of baptism—this being the only subject, remarkably enough, on which the authors of the *Report* anywhere think it necessary to appeal to Biblical chapter and verse in support of their statements. Even in this case the analysis is hardly accurate or complete. The section ends with paragraphs on the baptism of infants and baptismal regeneration. These paragraphs must be examined in more detail.

Infant Baptism

The assertion that infant baptism is theologically justifiable is one with which no convinced Methodist or Anglican would quarrel, though the theological basis of the practice is not discussed. It is further asserted that in adult baptism there clearly must be a personal confession of faith,¹ whereas in infant baptism the confession of the Church suffices, if taken together with the infant's later confession of his own faith at his confirmation. This is in itself quite unobjectionable, and shows that the authors would be against any move in the Church of England so to reduce the age of confirmation that the reaffirmation of the baptismal vows became a nullity. One only regrets the indistinctness of the idea of a confession of faith by 'the Church' ('the parents or guardians' would be better, seeing that the child's right to baptism depends on his covenant status, which in turn depends upon his relationship to parents who profess

the faith²), and the lack of any reference to the word of the gospel, through which the faith here asserted to be necessary to baptism (and rightly asserted, as we shall see) comes about (John xvii, 20; Rom. x, 17; Eph. i, 13).

Baptismal Regeneration

This lack of reference to the word becomes significant in the discussion of baptismal regeneration which follows. The question of regeneration and rebirth has already been raised a little earlier in the Statement, in a passage remarkable for its obscurity, which declares that 'Baptism is a sacrament of regeneration, for it is a sacrament of the gospel which has brought a new birth to the universe and to the individual', and that 'since baptism derives its authority from the gospel, the connection with regeneration seems to be established' (*Report*, p. 30, paragraph *b*). This *may* mean that regeneration really comes through the proclamation of the word of the gospel (Jas. i, 18; I Pet. i, 23-5), while baptism is only connected with regeneration through its connection with the gospel. Though the language used is different, the joint-statement on the gospel perhaps lends some support to this interpretation, where it says that justification by faith 'makes him [the individual] a new man' (*Report*, p. 20). However, one cannot have any confidence that this is the meaning, for it is not through preaching that the gospel brings 'a new birth to the universe', and the later passage on regeneration teaches something quite different from this, divorcing the new birth from the gospel and linking it much more distinctly with baptism.

The later passage runs as follows: 'Baptism, then, is the sign and seal of the new life in Christ. The child baptised is *regenerate*. That term has given rise to considerable controversy. If *regenerate* means the mature experience of a Christian believer, clearly it cannot be applied to infants. If, however, it refers to the initiation of the Christian life or to the fact that every child in baptism is given the status of a child of God within the family of the redeemed, is it not a right and proper word to use? Certainly the child is not conscious of the new birth but, if the analogy of birth is to be considered apposite, due recognition must be given to the operation of grace in unconscious processes which may find their fruition in faith and love. In any case,

none of those admitted to believers' baptism would claim regeneration in the sense that their life was uninterrupted communion with God' (*Report*, p. 31).

In this passage, baptism is on the one hand said to be a 'sign and seal' and to confer a 'status'—which few would dispute; on the other hand, it is said to be 'the initiation of the Christian life', and to effect 'the new birth', of which baptised infants are 'not conscious', but which is brought about by 'the operation of grace in unconscious processes which may' (though at the same time they may not) 'find their fruition in faith and love'. This operation of grace is not altogether unlike the experience of regenerate adults, who similarly lack 'uninterrupted communion with God'. Certainly the baptised infant does not enter at once into 'the mature experience of a Christian believer', but 'those admitted to believers' baptism' do. This is the obvious meaning of the passage.

The Methodist dissentients, perhaps thinking especially of the earlier passage, complain that what is said about baptismal regeneration is not clear, and go on to express the view that some interpretations of the phrase ought to be repudiated (*Report*, p. 61). What interpretations these are, they do not say. If the Roman Catholic (and Tractarian) interpretation is in their minds, that is exactly what the second passage teaches.³ Wesley's own interpretation, embodied in the fourteenth and thirty-ninth of *The Forty-four Sermons* (one of the doctrinal standards acknowledged by the Deed of Union), was that infants when baptised are always born again, but not adults; and that even infants often fall away from their regenerate state as they grow up, and need to be regenerated again through the preaching of the gospel.⁴ Thus, despite his belief in the baptismal regeneration of infants, Wesley was able to explain the prevailing ungodliness of England in his day, and the need for his own evangelistic work.

Wesley's view is obviously not unlike that expressed in the Methodist Statement, except with regard to adults (though this is an important difference). He believed his view to be that of the Church of England, expressed in its formularies, but here he was surely mistaken. It is true that the Prayer Book services for the baptism of infants make strong assertions about the regeneration of the candidates, but so does the service for the

baptism of adults: and if the language in the latter case is qualified by the requirement of faith and repentance in the candidates, so it is in the former case by the requirement of faith and repentance in the godparents, and in the infants also when 'they come of age to take it upon themselves'. This requirement is repeated in much the same terms in the catechism, and in different terms in two of the Articles—Article 27, where 'they that receive Baptism rightly' are they that already have 'faith' and 'grace', and Article 25, where the 'wholesome effect or operation' of the sacraments is confined to such as 'worthily receive the same'.⁵ Similarly, the author of the Homily for Whit Sunday bids his congregation (all doubtless baptised when infants) beseech God so to work in their hearts by the Holy Spirit that they may be 'regenerate and newly born again in all goodness, righteousness, sobriety and truth' (part 1). In view of the English Reformers' self-conscious use of sacramental language, it is incautious to infer from the infant baptism services that they believed even elect infants to be regenerated in infancy; the only grace that is plainly stated to be conferred in infancy is the remission of original sin (see the penultimate rubric of the service for the public baptism of infants, and the Homily *Of the Salvation of Mankind*, part 2), and even this is not said to be conferred on all baptised infants alike. Wesley's interpretation of the infant baptism services is thus wholly gratuitous, while his corollaries that regenerate infants often fall away into an unregenerate state, and that they can then be regenerated again, are hardly reconcilable with any interpretation of the Prayer Book language about the effects of baptism, or with Article 17.⁶

We now have before us three views of baptismal regeneration: the view of the Church of England, embodied in its formularies; the view of Wesley, contained in one of the normative documents of the Methodist Church; and the view propounded in the *Report*. The first is a thoroughly reformed view, the second a less consistently reformed view, and the third a thoroughly unreformed view. To suggest that the third should be the basis of agreement between churches which subscribe to the first and second is obviously absurd.⁷

The most serious objection to the view propounded in the *Report*, however, is not that it is the view of neither church, or

that it is useless as a basis for union, but that it contradicts the New Testament. It was stated earlier that the doctrine of regeneration contained in the *Report* leaves no function to be performed in regeneration by the word of the gospel. The New Testament, on the other hand, makes regeneration depend not only on baptism (John iii, 5; Titus iii, 5) but also on the preaching of the gospel (Jas. i, 18; I Pet. i, 23-5), and on faith in Christ (John i, 12 f.), the outcome of gospel preaching (John xvii, 20; Rom. x, 17; Eph. i, 13).⁸ The same is the case with the other benefits of baptism. Thus, on the one hand, the gift of the Spirit is said to come through baptism (Acts ii, 38), and so are remission of sins and a clean conscience (Acts ii, 38; xxii, 16; Eph. v, 26; Col. ii, 12 f.; Heb. x, 22), a share in Christ's death and resurrection (Rom. vi, 3-11; Col. ii, 12), the putting on of Christ and of sonship (Gal. iii, 27), and salvation (Titus iii, 5; I Pet. iii, 21). On the other hand, the gift of the Spirit is also said to come through faith (Gal. iii, 2, 14; Eph. i, 13), and so are remission of sins and a clean heart (Acts xiii, 38 f., xv, 9), a share in Christ's resurrection (Col. ii, 12), the putting on of Christ and of sonship (John i, 12; Gal. iii, 26), and salvation (Eph. ii, 8)—the same graces as before. Especially interesting are the passages which explicitly link baptism with the word or faith or repentance as the means of these graces (Acts ii, 38; Eph. v, 26; Col. ii, 12 f.) and the passages in which faith and baptism are virtually equated (Acts xix, 4 f.; Gal. iii, 26f.).

However we are to explain these paradoxes, any explanation which attributes the graces in question to baptism without faith is obviously excluded. The view which postulates them of unconscious infants must therefore be dismissed.⁹ The justification for baptising infants is not to be sought in their need for regeneration (though baptism conduces to their ultimate regeneration) but in their covenant status. To affirm that they are regenerated in infancy contradicts the explicit statements of the New Testament which we have just been considering, and in fact alters the Biblical conception of salvation beyond recognition. Such a view demotes the word from its eminence among the means of grace (if, indeed, it leaves the word any function at all); it makes entry on the Christian life possible for those who have not been justified by faith (if, indeed, it does not assert that they are justified by baptism instead); and it reduces

the scriptural idea of regeneration from that of a wonderful 'new-creation' (*palingenesis*, Titus iii, 5)—of a divine begetting, invariably manifested in godliness of life (I John iii, 9; v, 4, 18)—to the Roman Catholic (and Tractarian) notion of a mere spark of grace, unconsciously received, and often completely stifled by original sin.¹⁰ It is useless for the authors of the Methodist Statement to say that the sacraments 'should never be isolated from the Word of God declared in the Bible and in preaching' (*Report*, p. 33), if by their theory of baptism they deprive the word of its essential functions. It is useless for them to subscribe an account of the gospel which states that 'it turns on justification by the free grace of Christ, received by faith' and that this 'makes' the believer 'a new man' (*Report*, p. 20), if by their theory of baptism they maintain that one is made a new man, without being justified by faith, through this sacrament. And it is useless for them to try to dignify baptism by asserting that it regenerates even unconscious infants, if this forces them to reduce regeneration to something miserably feeble and impermanent, and so by implication to deny either the awful plight of human nature or the adequacy of God's provision for its salvation.

It would not here be appropriate to investigate at length the real relationship between regeneration and baptism. We must content ourselves with suggesting that in the New Testament this and other graces are attributed to baptism for three reasons. (1) They are attributed to baptism because baptism symbolises them. As a washing, it symbolises the washing away of sins (Acts xxii, 16). When administered by immersion, it symbolises burial and resurrection with Christ (Rom. vi, 3 f.; Col. ii, 12). When administered by affusion, it symbolises the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon believers (Titus iii, 5-6). (2) Though it is conversion to faith, through the word, that really effects these graces, they are attributed to baptism because baptism is the outward expression of conversion. It is an obligatory outward expression, not an optional one—obligatory both on the baptiser (Matt. xxviii, 19) and on the baptised (Acts ii, 38; xxii, 16). And in New Testament times it was an immediate outward expression, not the sequel of a long catechumenate: for whether the convert was a Jew or a Gentile, whether the place was public or private, he was baptised at

once (Acts ii, 41; viii, 12, 16, 36; ix, 18; x, 47 f.; xvi, 33; xviii, 8; xix, 5; xxii, 16). Hence, the New Testament is not speaking inaccurately when it attributes to baptism (the immediate, obligatory outward expression of conversion) those graces which result from conversion itself. (3) Baptism is a covenanting rite, signifying regeneration and remission of sins (the characteristic graces of the New Covenant—Jer. xxxi, 31-4; Heb. viii, 6-13; x, 15-18), and replaces the Old Testament covenanting rite of circumcision. It has always, since Abraham, been the privilege and obligation of those to whom God extends His covenant to submit to one or other of these rites, and, as far as ritual goes, these rites have been the unique, divinely-instituted means of entry into the covenant relationship. The two rites are also linked by the fact that a ritual washing or baptism for proselytes had probably been added to circumcision before the time of our Lord;¹¹ by St. Paul's words in Col. ii, 11 f.; and by three ideas which circumcision, like baptism, signifies—regeneration (Deut. xxx, 6), repentance (Deut. x, 16; Jer. iv, 4) and cleansing (Isa. lii, 1; Ezk. xlv, 7). Being a rite for the admission of believers into the New Covenant, baptism admits them also to all the blessings which the New Covenant embraces, beginning with regeneration and the other initial graces which baptism is in the New Testament stated to confer.¹²

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¹ Why a personal confession of faith should be a prerequisite, if the mature experience of a Christian believer is conferred on adults by baptism (see p. 54), the Statement does not explain.

² For a good statement of this traditional argument by a Methodist, see W. B. Pope, *A Compendium of Christian Theology*, vol. 3, pp. 316-18, 320-2.

³ For the Roman Catholic doctrine, see pp. 57, 60.

⁴ For a more widely ranging examination of Wesley's teaching on baptism, see J. R. Parris, *John Wesley's Doctrine of the Sacraments*, ch. 2. Parris comes to similar conclusions about Wesley's teaching. He is wrong, however, in supposing that Wesley's doctrine of the baptismal regeneration of infants was basically the traditional High Church view. Wesley was, in fact, one of the earliest Anglican divines to attribute regeneration, in the full spiritual sense, to all baptized infants. For evidence of this, see W. Goode, *The Effects of Baptism*, ch. 12.

⁵ The only case in which it might be argued that these qualifications do not apply, is that of a child who dies in infancy. In the nature of the case, such a child cannot repent and believe in person, and the private baptism service for infants in danger of death uses the same language about their regeneration as is used of other infants, without even requiring a confession of faith and repentance by godparents, unless the child survives and can be presented in church.

⁶ The question whether the Church of England teaches the regeneration of all baptized infants was fully explored during the Gorham controversy of the last century. The conclusion reached, both by the court and by impartial observers such as J. B. Mozley (himself previously a Tractarian), was that it does not. For further information on Anglican teaching, see W. Goode, *The Effects of Baptism*, and G. W. Bromiley, *Baptism and the Anglican Reformers*.

⁷ One should not perhaps state without qualification that the Methodist Church subscribes to the second view. Though there have probably always been some Methodists who believed in the baptismal regeneration of infants, the doctrine has met with strong opposition from others. It is possible to argue that such opposition is permitted by the cautious and somewhat obscure language used by the Deed of Union in acknowledging the *Notes on the New Testament* and *The Forty-four Sermons* as doctrinal standards. Dr. A. Skevington Wood, moreover, in a private communication, draws my attention to J. H. Rigg, *The Churchmanship of John Wesley*, p. 45 f., and E. H. Sugden (ed.) *Wesley's Standard Sermons*, vol. 1, pp. 280-2, where it is pointed out that Wesley himself, in preparing *The Sunday Service of the Methodists* (1784 and 1786), omitted the formal assertions of regeneration in the baptism service and the statement about the effects of baptism in the Articles, which suggests that he had decided by this period not to insist on his doctrine of the baptismal regeneration of infants; also that when the infant baptism service in the *Wesleyan Book of Offices* was officially revised in 1882, even the reference to John iii, 5, retained by Wesley, was omitted. Hence, in the current *Book of Offices*, authorised by the Methodist Conference of

1936, there is no reference to John iii, 5, in the infant baptism service. Relevant too are the *Memorandum on Infant Baptism* (to be found in the *Minutes* of the 1936 Methodist Conference) and the *Statement on Holy Baptism* (in *Ministry, Baptism and Membership in the Methodist Church*), approved by the Methodist Conference in 1936 and 1952 respectively. The former denies that regeneration takes place in infancy, through baptism, and the latter manifests a distinct unwillingness to assert it. It is arguable that the Conference was not in these cases interpreting the doctrine of the Methodist Church so much as contradicting it; but the fact must not be overlooked that the supreme rule of faith, according to the deed of Union, is 'the Divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures', and it may be that Conference had tested Wesley's view by Scripture and rejected it. If so, one could wish that for the sake of clarity the fact had been stated. Of course, if the Methodist Church does not subscribe to Wesley's doctrine of the baptismal regeneration of infants, the teaching propounded in the *Report* is even less suitable as a basis of union between the two churches than it would otherwise be.

⁸ It may perhaps be replied that the *Report* meets this point by making faith a necessary condition of baptism, and therefore of regeneration: even in the case of infants it does not dispense with faith, but simply allows others to supply the faith for the time being (p. 31). There is no reason to dispute that faith, as a condition of *baptism*, may be temporarily supplied for infants by others. But in the case of *regeneration*, faith is not just a condition (John i, 12 f.) but also a manifestation of the grace (I John v, 1). Faith cannot anticipate regeneration, therefore, and to be regenerated one must have faith in person.

⁹ In saying this, the writer is not intending to express an opinion on the special case of those who die in infancy, or to limit God's sovereignty in regeneration, any more than he is intending to deny all activity of the Spirit of God in infants. It is possible that in exceptional cases regeneration does take place in infancy. But if New Testament teaching means anything, this is not a normal time for regeneration to take place.

¹⁰ This is the view of Aquinas (for references see J. B. Mozley, *A Review of the Baptismal Controversy*, part 1, ch. 7) and seems to be implicitly endorsed by the Council of Trent (*Canons and Decrees*, session 5, paragraphs 4 f.; session 6, ch. 7).

¹¹ The one real piece of evidence for this is the Testament of Levi, xiv, 6.

¹² On the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, see further E. B. Pusey, *Scriptural Views of Holy Baptism*; J. B. Mozley, *A Review of the Baptismal Controversy*; N. Dimock, *The Doctrine of the Sacraments*; H. T. Andrews, *The Place of the Sacraments in the Teaching of St. Paul* (in P. T. Forsyth, *The Church and the Sacraments*), etc.

CHAPTER FIVE

HOLY COMMUNION AND THE WESLEYS' HYMNS

ON the subject of the Holy Communion, the Methodist Statement refers to two documents. One is the Deed of Union, which simply says that baptism and the Lord's Supper are 'of divine appointment and perpetual obligation' (*Report*, p. 29). The other is the collection of eucharistic hymns composed by the Wesleys, which the Statement describes as 'an indispensable exposition of Methodist eucharistic doctrine' (*Report*, p. 31). No reference is made to the relevant passages of Wesley's *Notes on the New Testament* or his *Forty-four Sermons*. Yet these are doctrinal standards in the Methodist Church, whereas the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* are not. J. R. Parris has recently urged caution in treating the *Hymns* as evidence of Wesley's beliefs (*John Wesley's Doctrine of the Sacraments*, p. 70 f.), and obviously far more caution is needed in treating the *Hymns* as evidence of the beliefs of the Methodist Church, especially in view of the fact that the Methodist Church has been sharply divided in its attitude towards them.¹ Why, then, does the Methodist Statement emphasise the teaching of the *Hymns* instead of the relatively uncontroversial teaching of the *Notes on the New Testament* and *The Forty-four Sermons*? If one may judge from the eucharistic teaching propounded by the Statement itself, the reason is that the *Hymns* have been 'the main source of the "High Church" interpretation of Wesley's doctrine of the Lord's Supper'.² Since the last century, Anglo-Catholics have been claiming John Wesley as a supporter of their eucharistic views,³ and it is presumably with the desire of conciliating this school of thought that the Methodist Statement both concentrates on the *Hymns* and expounds them in the Anglo-Catholic manner.

The Doctrinal Background of the Hymns

The vogue enjoyed by the Anglo-Catholic interpretation of the

Hymns does not, of course, mean that it is the right interpretation. On the contrary, it is a complete anachronism. This point has lately been made, though without much in the way of proof, by J. R. Parris (*op. cit.*, ch. 3). Unfortunately, none of the Methodist writers on the sacramental teaching of the Wesleys has been distinguished for knowledge or understanding of classical Anglican theology, but Parris perceives more clearly than his predecessors that against this background it is not permissible to interpret the *Hymns* as teaching Anglo-Catholic eucharistic doctrine, and it is a pity that his book did not appear in time to influence the Methodist Statement. One can safely assert, and without qualification, that before the Oxford Movement the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine was universally denied by Anglican divines.⁴ Two Elizabethan bishops maintained it, until forced to conform to the Thirty-nine Articles, and so did Hadrian Saravia, an early Protestant immigrant from the Continent. With these three champions the Lutheran view of the eucharist died out in the Church of England, being repudiated, by implication, in many parts of the formularies, and explicitly in Article 29, in the first part of the Homily *Of the Worthy Receiving of the Sacrament*, and in the declaration on kneeling, commonly called the Black Rubric, at the end of the Prayer Book communion service. The doctrine of the mass (the doctrine that the eucharist is a sacrifice identical with the atoning sacrifice of Christ) was, prior to the Oxford Movement, rejected by Anglican divines with a unanimity if possible even greater. Some account of their teaching on this point, and of the decided support which it finds in the Anglican formularies, was given in the second chapter on pages 22 to 24. But both in respect of the real presence and of the eucharistic sacrifice there are certain complicating factors which (though one regrets the necessity of saying it) have been diligently employed by many writers to mislead those not very well acquainted with Anglican literature.

The Real Presence

In the case of the real presence, the chief complicating factor is language. Partly in deference to the Fathers, partly as a reaction against the charge of holding a low view of the eucharist, and partly as a sincere expression of reverence, Anglican

divines have always spoken of the sacrament in the most glowing terms, and there is nothing unusual in the fact that the Wesleys, being Anglicans, do so in their hymns. Such language is, of course, fully warranted, but taken out of its context and put in the new context of an alien explanation, it is likely to be misunderstood. The *Tracts for the Times* led the way in employing this method of interpretation. On the tractators' theory that one ought, by hook or by crook, to impose a 'Catholic' meaning upon ecclesiastical language, such re-interpretation is proper and commendable, but from the historian's point of view it is quite unjustifiable. The expression 'real presence' (*praesentia realis*) is especially open to misrepresentation, because in the Reformation period it generally meant transubstantiation, and was therefore repudiated in the original wording of the Black Rubric, as it appeared in the 1552 Prayer Book. By the time of the 1662 revision, however, Anglican divines were regularly asserting a 'real presence' in a spiritual sense,⁵ and it was perhaps to avoid the danger of misunderstanding, which had thus arisen, that the phrase 'real and essential presence' in the Black Rubric was then altered to 'corporal presence'.⁶ Wesley himself, in the preface to the eucharistic hymns which he 'extracted from Dr. Brevint' (that is, from Daniel Brevint's treatise *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice*), asserts the 'real presence',⁷ but plainly in a reformed sense. His words are these: 'This Victim [Christ] . . . having been thence carried up to heaven . . . spreads salvation all around, as the burnt-offering did its smoke. And thus His Body and Blood have everywhere, but especially at this Sacrament, a true and real Presence' (section iv, paragraph 5). The 'real presence' of Christ's sacrificed body and blood is here explicitly identified with 'salvation', and is stated to be a presence 'everywhere', not just in the sacrament. That is to say, Christ's sacrificed body and blood are affirmed to be everywhere present *in the salvation which they effect*. But this is not a real presence in the Roman Catholic or Anglo-Catholic sense: it is what would be called today a 'virtual presence' (a presence in effect or *virtue*). Virtualism, or receptionism (the view that Christ's sacramental presence only begins when the sacrament is worthily *received*), is the traditional doctrine of the Church of England,⁸ and it is this which Wesley inherited from writers like Brevint.

It is currently the fashion to draw a sharp distinction between virtualism and receptionism, and to represent the virtualism of Cranmer as a much less exalted doctrine than the receptionism of Hooker. Actually, the difference seems to be mainly one of emphasis. Both traditions stem mainly from Calvin, and in the case of many Anglican writers on the sacrament it is impossible to decide whether they should be called receptionists or virtualists. Receptionists as well as virtualists affirm that the benefits of Christ's passion are conveyed in the sacrament. Virtualists as well as receptionists affirm that there is spiritual union with Christ through the sacrament, and that His sacrificed body and blood are verily and indeed taken and received there. And since receptionists maintain that Christ's sacrificed body and blood are now in heaven, not here, and that it is in the heart and soul, not the mouth and stomach, that they are received, what can this be but a reception of them in their effects, i.e. a *virtual* reception?

Nevertheless, there existed at one time, chiefly among the Nonjurors, a peculiar kind of virtualism which cannot be assimilated to receptionism, and some have attributed this doctrine to Wesley.⁹ Those who advocated it were greatly impressed by the epiclesis, found in most of the ancient liturgies, and held that at the consecration the Holy Spirit descends upon the bread and wine, and without changing them into anything else imparts to them certain miraculous powers, so that they become, not in reality but in virtue and effect, the body and blood of Christ. Now, Wesley was certainly not uninfluenced, especially in his earlier years, by the Nonjurors, and he was acquainted with the writings of John Johnson (a learned but eccentric and injudicious writer, who, though not himself one of the Nonjurors, was the chief exponent of their eucharistic beliefs).¹⁰ But even if he had accepted Johnson's teaching, this would have been very different from accepting the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the real presence. For Johnson utterly repudiated both transubstantiation and consubstantiation, and was even suspicious of receptionism, as having a Romeward tendency: the real presence in the elements which he asserted was a presence of the Holy Ghost, not of Christ's body and blood.¹¹ However, it is in point of fact very doubtful whether Wesley did accept Johnson's theory. To take literally the poetic

language of the eucharistic hymns would be rash, and in Wesley's prose works there are no echoes of Johnson's peculiar teaching:¹² he writes throughout like a virtualist or receptionist of the ordinary Anglican kind. In the preface to the hymns, certainly the best commentary on their meaning, Section IV, *Concerning the Sacrament, as it is a Means of Grace* explains that what makes it a means of grace is the fact that it conveys the benefits of Christ's sacrifice. And in those of Wesley's writings which are acknowledged as doctrinal standards in the Methodist Church, the *Notes on the New Testament* emphasise that Christ's language at the Last Supper was figurative not literal, and explain the sacrament as a sign, a remembrance, a covenanting rite and an act of communion (see the comments on the institution narratives and I Cor. 10); while *The Forty-Four Sermons* commend the ancient belief that the sacrament was 'the grand channel whereby the grace of the Spirit was conveyed to the souls of all the children of God' (Sermon 21), and paraphrase I Cor. x, 16, as follows: 'Is not the eating of that bread, and the drinking of that cup, the outward, visible means, whereby God conveys into our souls all that spiritual grace, that righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which were purchased by the body of Christ once broken, and the blood of Christ once shed for us?' (Sermon 12). Here we clearly have virtualism, but nothing particularly suggestive of Johnson's form of virtualism, while Anglo-Catholic realism is definitely excluded. If one reads the hymns in the light of Wesley's other works and the preface, one can see that they lend no support to the 'Catholic' doctrine, but even oppose it.¹³

The Eucharistic Sacrifice

In the case of the eucharistic sacrifice, the Anglo-Catholic appeal to the hymns may at first sight seem to be justified. Both the hymns themselves and the preface use such expressions as the following: we 'offer' Christ's sacrifice, we 'set it forth before the eyes of God', it is an 'eternal sacrifice', and our great High Priest still 'offers Himself up' in heaven. It was from Hymn 125 that William Bright's well-known hymn 'And now, O Father, mindful of the love', written to express the Tractarians' doctrine of the eucharistic sacrifice, took its origin. Similar language is found scattered in other parts of Wesley's writings, and

even in a passage in *The Forty-four Sermons* makes some approach to it, where I Cor. xi, 26, is interpreted as meaning 'Ye openly exhibit the same [the Lord's death], by these visible signs, before God, and angels, and men. Ye manifest your solemn remembrance of his death, till he cometh in the clouds of heaven' (Sermon 12). Moreover, Wesley's doctrine of clerical priesthood,¹⁴ which we glanced at in chapter two, is here relevant.

The background of this teaching again casts much light on it. We have seen how utterly the Anglican Reformers and the Anglican formularies reject the sacrifice of the mass. But in 1648 a new theory of the eucharistic sacrifice was broached in the Church of England by Joseph Mede, whose posthumous treatise *The Christian Sacrifice* teaches that a literal offering is made to God in the Holy Communion; not, however, an offering of Christ's body and blood, but of bread and wine. This doctrine, which had been foreshadowed in the communion service of the 1637 Scottish Prayer Book, found its chief supporter in John Johnson, and was general among the Non-jurors, but its following in the Church of England was never large, though it still found advocates as late as the second half of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, there were throughout the seventeenth century, as we shall see, many divines who did not accept this teaching but were nevertheless keen to maintain the sacrificial language used of the eucharist by the Fathers and the ancient liturgies, which they interpreted in a figurative sense. They had none of the modern contempt for what is figurative, but understood well that though a thing may not literally be what it symbolises, it may still be something of comparable importance. In the Holy Communion, so they maintained, the sacrifice of the cross is symbolised, and Christ's passion is there set before God, in that we plead through this symbolism for the grace which His passion purchased. We are accustomed to pray in the name of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Communion is a prayer in His name, but of a symbolical sort. Through His passion our great High Priest intercedes in heaven, and through His passion we pray on earth, both verbally and symbolically.¹⁵ In this way, the sacrament is a 'memorial' of Christ's passion not only before men but also before God. In this way, Christ's sacrificed body and blood are

still being 'offered', both in heaven and earth, not in the sense of being repeatedly separated in death, but in the sense of being repeatedly presented (appealed to) in prayer. There are thus two grounds—the symbolism and the use we make of it—on which the Holy Communion can figuratively be called a 'sacrifice'; and, such being the case, the Lord's table can figuratively be called an 'altar', and the minister can figuratively be called a 'priest'. But none of the language is literal.

This latter view is to be found in the writings of such eminent divines and dignitaries of the Church of England as Richard Field, Lancelot Andrewes and Jeremy Taylor,¹⁶ but comes to its fullest expression in the works of Dean Brevint. Both these views of the eucharistic sacrifice were propounded by men who utterly repudiated the mass (Brevint wrote a treatise, his *Missale Romanum*, against it), but the proponents of the latter view had the advantage of being able to claim with some justice that they really added nothing to the eucharistic teaching of the New Testament. For the Holy Communion, as a reminder of Christ's death, is not only a stimulus to thanksgiving but also a stimulus to prayer, which is all that these writers wish to assert. It is therefore of particular interest to note that Brevint, whose treatise (not only in its general teaching, but in many particular passages) formed the basis of the Wesleys' eucharistic hymns,¹⁷ was an adherent of the latter view, not the former. This can easily be verified from his writings, either in their full form, or in the abridgment with which Wesley prefaced the eucharistic hymns.¹⁸ Take, for example, section vi of Wesley's abridgment, *Concerning the Sacrament, as it is a Sacrifice. And First, of the Commemorative Sacrifice* (there follow sections on the sacrifice of ourselves and the sacrifice of our goods, though these contain little that is of present relevance). Here Brevint (as paraphrased by Wesley) emphasises that Christ's sacrifice 'by a *real* oblation was not to be offered more than once', but adds that it is 'by a devout and thankful commemoration, to be offered up every day'. 'The Sacrifice in itself can never be repeated', he goes on, but 'this Sacrament, by our remembrance, becomes a kind of Sacrifice, whereby we present before God the Father that precious Oblation of His Son once offered. And thus do we every day offer unto God the meritorious sufferings of our Lord,

as the only sure ground whereon God may give, and we obtain, the blessings we pray for.'¹⁹

It is obvious that this teaching goes far towards explaining Wesley's sacrificial language, and gives it a meaning quite distinct from the theory of Johnson, and still further removed from the doctrine of the mass, entertained (in one form or another) by Anglo-Catholics.²⁰ The eucharistic sacrifice is affirmed to be not 'a *real* oblation' but merely 'a kind of sacrifice'. The only elements in Wesley's teaching which require a further word of explanation are the phrase 'eternal sacrifice' and his theory about the ministry. 'Eternal' or 'everlasting sacrifice', in the context of this teaching, presumably means a sacrifice which, though past and unrepeatable, is eternally effective, and may therefore be eternally pleaded in prayer. Wesley's teaching on the priesthood of the ministry is simply this: that the administration of the rites of Holy Communion and baptism is a priestly function, whereas preaching is not,²¹ and consequently that ministers of the sacraments must always be ordained men, whereas preachers in exceptional cases need not be. This was the reason why Wesley objected to lay-preachers administering the sacraments, a fact noted in chapter one.²² Since baptism, like the Holy Communion, is a rite, it is understandable (though not perhaps altogether justifiable) that Wesley reserved this also to the ministers of the Holy Communion, that is, to the priesthood. It is also understandable that he insisted on the minister of the sacrifice being in an external succession or at least bearing public office; though, since he presumably believed that the Christian priest, like the Christian sacrifice and altar, is only figuratively such, this insistence seems to be based on the arbitrary extension of a metaphor. It also brings Wesley into formal conflict with the Methodist Deed of Union, which maintains that ministers hold no priesthood other than that which is common to the Lord's people. But when Wesley's theory of the priesthood of the ministry is properly understood, one can see that the conflict is of no great doctrinal significance.²³

It is now clear that there is nothing unreformed in Wesley's teaching on the eucharist, and it is sad that the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, perhaps the greatest collection of eucharistic hymns that Christendom can boast, have in many cases be-

come, through the influence of the Oxford Movement, so liable to misconstruction that it is hardly expedient for Protestants to use them today. One looks forward to the time when they can all be used again without fear of misinterpretation. But nothing could show more clearly the danger of misconstruction which exists at present than the fact that the authors of the Methodist Statement, though writing from outside the Church of England, and presumably exercising that circumspection which befits the representatives of a large body of Protestant Christians, have themselves expounded the Hymns in the Anglo-Catholic manner.

NOTES

¹ See J. E. Rattenbury, *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, pp. 86–100, and J. C. Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, pp. vii–x.

² J. R. Parris, *John Wesley's Doctrine of the Sacraments*, p. 70.

³ For references, see J. E. Rattenbury, *op. cit.*, p. 86, and J. C. Bowmer, *op. cit.*, p. viii.

⁴ For ample evidence of the teaching of Anglican divines on the eucharistic presence between the Reformation and the Oxford Movement, see the relevant works mentioned in note 2 on p. 51. The chief arguments which these divines, in common with those of other Protestant churches, used against the real presence, will be found on p. 76 f.

⁵ See, for example, Jeremy Taylor's work *The Real Presence and Spiritual of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, proved, against the doctrine of Transubstantiation* (1654). For further evidence, see N. Dimock, *The History of the Book of Common Prayer in its bearing on Present Eucharistic Controversies*, pp. 128–35.

⁶ At all events, the change was not intended to accommodate teaching of the Roman Catholic or Lutheran type, which the final words of the rubric continue to exclude; and even Peter Gunning, out of consideration for whom some believe the change to have been made, had no desire to accommodate such teaching. Gunning's odd conception of the eucharistic presence may be seen in D. Stone, *A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, vol. 2, p. 319 f.

⁷ The phrase also occurs in the *Hymns* themselves: see Hymns 66 and 116.

⁸ The terms, of course, are not traditional. The earliest examples of them given in the *New English Dictionary* date from the latter part of the nineteenth century. See also the report *Doctrine in the Church of England*, p. 178.

⁹ So J. E. Rattenbury, *op. cit.*, pp. 49–51, and J. C. Bowmer, *op. cit.*, p. 86 f.

¹⁰ See J. C. Bowmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–36; J. R. Parris, *op. cit.*, pp. 18–29.

¹¹ See his *Unbloody Sacrifice and Altar*, vol. 1, pp. 302–23; vol. 2, p. 3 f., etc.

¹² Unless one includes matters of practice. Johnson preferred the mixed chalice (*op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 84 f., 203), and the Usagers among the Nonjurors insisted on it. For Wesley's view, see J. C. Bowmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 92, 175 f. Johnson, moreover, like Wesley, emphasised frequency of communion (*op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 123–6, 180–98). But this emphasis was not confined to Johnson and the Nonjurors: it is found even in Latitudinarians such as Burnet (*An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Article 31) and Tillotson (*A Persuasive to Frequent Communion*), though the phrase 'the daily sacrifice' in the 137th and 166th of the eucharistic hymns may be derived from Johnson (*The Unbloody Sacrifice and Altar*, vol. 2, p. 180).

¹³ Consider, for example, the words in Hymn 89, 'The altar streams with sacred blood'. Do they mean that the communion wine is running all over the holy table? One only has to ask oneself this question to see that no Anglo-Catholic could have written the hymn. For further evidence of

Wesley's view regarding the eucharistic presence, see J. R. Parris, *op. cit.*, ch. 3.

¹⁴ See J. C. Bowmer, *op. cit.*, chs. 6 and 11; J. R. Parris, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-81, and A. B. Lawson, *John Wesley and the Christian Ministry*, pp. 83-95.

¹⁵ As will be seen in a moment, this idea of prayer as an offering of Christ's sacrifice is one of the crucial ideas in the eucharistic hymns. There is nothing inappropriate, therefore, in using the hymns which express this idea as hymns on prayer. Hence, Bowmer's complaint that the Methodist Hymn Book includes one such hymn in the section entitled 'The Church in Prayer', and his consequent charge of misinterpretation (*The Lord's Supper in Methodism 1791-1960*, p. 55), are not called for. The compilers of the Hymn Book evidently understood the hymn better than Bowmer does.

¹⁶ Relevant passages are collected by T. S. L. Vogan (*The True Doctrine of the Eucharist*, p. 454 f.) and D. Stone (*op. cit.*, ch. 13). It is best to let the passages speak for themselves and to ignore Stone's comments.

¹⁷ J. R. Parris is confusing on this point. He states in one place that Wesley's sacrificial teaching is mainly derived from Brevint, but elsewhere that it comes from Nonjuror sources and owes much to Johnson: incidentally, he finds its meaning far from clear (*op. cit.*, pp. 23 f., 81, 92). Evidence of Johnson's influence on Wesley, as we have said, is actually not easy to trace, and this is as true on the subject of sacrifice as on other aspects of eucharistic teaching. The fact that in one of the *Hymns for our Lord's Resurrection*, published the year after the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, the phrase 'unbloody sacrifice' is used (see J. C. Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, p. 29), may perhaps be reckoned evidence, but the use of the phrase does not imply acceptance of Johnson's ideas, since it belongs not so much to Johnson as to the Fathers, from whom he derives it. The phrase also occurs in an undated MS. of Charles Wesley's printed by Bowmer (*op. cit.*, appendix 3), which, to judge by its ignorant contempt for Luther, Calvin and the Protestant churches abroad, is the work of a young man, one who has imbibed the exclusive episcopalianism of the Nonjurors. He speaks of apostolic tradition as 'the unerring rule' for interpreting Scripture (an opinion reminiscent of the Nonjuror Thomas Brett: see his book *Tradition Necessary to Explain and Interpret the Holy Scriptures*), and of the eucharist as 'the unbloody sacrifice of the Representative Body and Blood of Christ' (language characteristic of Johnson). In this context, 'unbloody sacrifice' probably carries Johnson's meaning, but the MS. appears to date from that early period when the influence of the Nonjurors upon the brothers was at its strongest, and Charles can no longer have accepted Johnson's main eucharistic beliefs when he took as the basis for the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* the treatise by Brevint.

¹⁸ There is further confirmation in the fact that Waterland, the great opponent of the sacrificial theory of Johnson and his associates, recommends Brevint's writings as an unequalled exposition of his own views (*Works*, vol. 5, p. 139 f.).

¹⁹ These quotations give expression to another distinction which marked off the teaching of Brevint and Wesley from that of Johnson. Johnson, by redefining the word 'offer', was able to maintain that Christ offered Himself not on the cross but at the Last Supper, and that therefore His offering was not made once for all, thereafter only to be symbolised, but is repeated at every repetition of the Lord's Supper (*op. cit.*, vol. 2, introduction). This, incidentally, is an example of the way in which the doctrine of the eucharistic

sacrifice may lead theologians not just to compromise but actually to alter the doctrine of the atonement. We shall later find other examples.

²⁰ For direct proof of Wesley's hostility to the mass, see J. R. Parris, *op. cit.*, p. 83, quoting from Wesley's *A Roman Catechism. With a reply thereto*.

²¹ Wesley's contention that preaching is not a priestly function (admittedly it is not exclusively such) must be regarded as very questionable, in view of the priestly duty of teaching the Law (see p. 16 above). But this is not of very great importance, since Wesley did not, of course, regard Christian ministers as priests only, and exclude them from preaching.

²² The evidence for this account of Wesley's teaching on priesthood may be found at the places indicated in note 14 above.

²³ It may be worth briefly pointing out the differences between Wesley's conception of the priesthood of the ministry and Moberly's (that adopted in the *Report*). First, on Wesley's view, the Holy Communion and baptism, not the Holy Communion and absolution, are the two chief functions of the priesthood; secondly, Wesley's teaching is based not on the priesthood of believers but on the symbolism of the Holy Communion; and thirdly, Wesley's teaching is figurative not literal, and has consequently no connection with the doctrine of the mass. Any thought that it is Wesley's view which the *Report* is advancing when it deals with priesthood (p. 23 f.) is prohibited also by the fact that the statement on priesthood is put forward primarily (though not only) in the name of the Anglican negotiators (see paragraphs 4 and 6). The Anglican negotiators cannot be supposed to hold Wesley's view, whereas Moberly's view is only too common among modern Anglicans.

CHAPTER SIX

HOLY COMMUNION AND THE METHODIST STATEMENT

OUR somewhat lengthy examination of Wesley's teaching and its background has been necessary, not only for discovering the real meaning of those eucharistic hymns which the Methodist Statement professes to follow in its teaching, but also for establishing the true eucharistic doctrine both of the Methodist Church and of the Church of England. It remains to compare the teaching of the *Hymns* and that of the Methodist and Anglican formularies with the teaching of the Methodist Statement itself, which must also be compared with the teaching of the New Testament. Much that the Methodist Statement says on the subject of the eucharist is uncontroversial, but this is not at all the case with its assertions about the real presence and the eucharistic sacrifice. It is here that our attention must now be concentrated.

The Real Presence

On page 32 of the *Report*, in paragraph *b*, the Methodist Statement deals with the commemorative aspect of the Holy Communion, and does this in a manner which does not at first sight seem to call for serious criticism. The curious idea that the sacrament is in remembrance of the future as well as the past need not detain us, though the fact that this theory was much favoured by Dom. Gregory Dix¹ is probably significant, as we shall see. In the next paragraph, however, the Statement goes on to make the commemoration the basis of the communion of Christ's body and blood and the real presence: 'The act of remembrance leads to communion. . . . It is the body offered that he gives us. . . . Holy Communion is a sacrament of the Real Presence'. Provided 'the Real Presence' is not understood in the popular Anglo-Catholic way, as meaning the presence of Christ's flesh and blood in the consecrated bread and wine,

this combination of the remembrance with the presence of Christ is not incapable of a reformed interpretation; though if a reformed meaning is intended, it surely ought to be less ambiguously expressed. Thus, the meaning could be C. H. Dodd's meaning, where he says that 'The words [of Christ at the Last Supper] lead us directly from mere remembrance to communion' (*Christian Worship*, ed. N. Micklem, p. 80), in the sense that when we remember how Christ said 'Take, eat, this is my body', it disposes us to communicate. As the writings of C. H. Dodd have certainly influenced the Methodist Statement in another respect (see p. 77f. below), one hesitates to reject this interpretation. But in the context of still more recent discussion, it is difficult not to see in the language of the Statement a reflection also of a current Anglo-Catholic theory about the words 'in remembrance of me' (Luke xxii, 19; I Cor. xi, 24 f.), which would involve understanding 'the Real Presence' in the Anglo-Catholic sense. Earlier theologians of the Anglo-Catholic school have used these words of our Lord's in attempting to prove the eucharistic sacrifice, but G. Dix tries to prove the real presence from them.² According to Dix, the word *anamnesis* and its cognates do not mean that something in the past is merely brought to mind, but that it is literally made present again; and he applies this primarily to Christ's sacrifice, made present in the eucharist, but also to Christ's flesh and blood, which must likewise be present there if His sacrifice is.³ The passages to which he appeals in proof of this usage are Num. v, 15 LXX; I Kings xvii, 18 LXX; and Heb. x, 3; the obvious meaning of which is simply that sins are brought (in the first two cases) to the mind of God, causing Him to take vengeance, and (in the third case) to the minds of men, causing them to see their need of atonement. But though the grounds of Dix's theory are so insecure, other Anglo-Catholics have, with due acknowledgment, adopted it, including A. G. Hebert (*The Parish Communion*, p. 9 f.) and E. L. Mascall (*Christ, the Christian and the Church*, p. 170), and so at least two of the Methodist writers on the eucharistic thought and practice of the Wesleys, J. C. Bowmer⁴ and, more surprisingly, J. R. Parris.⁵ Bowmer actually supposes that Wesley anticipated Dix's theory, and that the eucharistic hymns express it; and it may be that under Bowmer's influence the notion has found its way into the Methodist

Statement, itself professedly following the teaching of the eucharistic hymns. One hardly need say that Wesley did not really hold Dix's view. An examination of the statements on the eucharist in his prose writings, and of the preface to the *Hymns*, shows that this sophisticated conception of remembrance had never entered his head. And when Hymn 123 (cited both by Bowmer and by Parris in this connection) says:

'By faith we see Thy sufferings past
In this mysterious rite *brought back*'

the next two lines explain what is meant by the poetical expression here used:

'And on Thy grand oblation cast
Its saving benefit partake.'

The dying Christ is only *virtually* 'brought back': what literally happens is that the sacrament, in a manner which surpasses our understanding, makes us partakers of the 'saving benefit' of His death.

The more we examine the Methodist Statement, the more we shall find indications of the influence of Dix. But it would be rash to conclude that the signatories actually accept the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the real presence. Even after several decades of ecumenical discussion, this particular doctrine has probably made little headway among Methodists. Much more characteristic of the Methodist Church is a belief in the personal but spiritual presence of Christ at the sacrament, such as is maintained by C. Ryder Smith (*The Sacramental Society*, pp. 137-45, etc.) and implicitly by A. R. George (in the *Scottish Journal of Theology*, vol. IV, 1951, and *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, vol. CLXXX, 1955). Moreover, Bowmer and Parris, despite their adoption of Dix's *anamnesis* argument, do not maintain, as the teaching either of Wesley or of Methodists as a body, any other doctrine of the real presence than a purely spiritual one.⁶ Possibly they misunderstand Dix, who certainly uses language in this connection which is somewhat suggestive of virtualism; possibly they accept his argument in as far as it concerns the eucharistic sacrifice, of which they are actually writing—understanding the eucharistic sacrifice in the sense indicated on page 82 below—but reject it in as far as it concerns

the real presence. And in either case, the authors of the Methodist Statement may be doing something similar: the meaning of their words may not be essentially different from the meaning of C. H. Dodd's words, in the passage cited above. But unfortunately one cannot be sure. For though it is hard to believe that the authors of the Methodist Statement themselves accept the Anglo-Catholic doctrine, the fact remains that their language is liable to be interpreted as expressing it, and they do not, like Bowmer and Parris, elsewhere reject it. In view of the studied ambiguity which characterises the *Report* as a whole, no one could have any confidence, unless the authors were to say so, that it is by accident and not by design that room has been left for an alternative interpretation, such as would be acceptable to Anglo-Catholics.

This is a serious state of affairs. For the doctrine of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the consecrated bread and wine, maintained by Anglo-Catholics, is in conflict with many fundamental Biblical truths. In fact, it hardly survives among those who base their doctrine on Scripture alone. Lutherans of the traditional school maintain it, while some Liberals, whether or not they accept it as actually true, nevertheless agree with 'Catholics' that the Bible teaches it. But the view which has generally obtained among Protestants is that sacramental realism altogether divorces the Christian rites from their Jewish setting, and reduces the word of the gospel, which Scripture reckons so vital a means of grace, to a position of insignificance. Is it consistent with the glory of God, Protestants have gone on to ask, and with Christ's present session in glory, that His body and blood should be liable to all the indignities which may befall the bread and wine? Is it consistent with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as the Giver of all grace, that a prime means of grace should be the oral participation of Christ's flesh and blood? Is it consistent with the doctrines of the bodily ascension, session and return of our Lord, that His body should be present now on earthly altars? Is it consistent with Christ's real humanity, that His body should be present simultaneously in heaven and in a multitude of places on earth? Is it consistent with the nature of Christ's resurrection body, and with the reality of time (to which Scripture subjects even the glorified humanity of Christ⁷), that His body and blood should be present

today, His body in the bread and His blood in the wine, still separated as they were only at the time between His death and resurrection?⁸ It is impossible to face such objections unless it can be shown that the New Testament clearly teaches the real presence. The Church of England and the Methodist Church, as represented by their formularies, express a strong conviction that this cannot be shown—a conviction with which most Protestants, whether of the sixteenth, the eighteenth or even the twentieth century, are in hearty sympathy. Consequently, before the Methodist Statement could command general support from informed Protestants, it would be necessary for the signatories to make it clear that they do not lack the courage of their convictions, and to give a public assurance that they do not intend by their Statement to countenance in any way the doctrine of the real presence as Anglo-Catholics understand it, but only to affirm the spiritual presence of the risen Christ, promised to His people not just at the eucharist but wherever they meet (Matt. xviii, 20), the presence whereby He becomes in the eucharist their ‘spiritual food’ and ‘spiritual drink’ (I Cor. x, 1-4; see also John vi, 63).⁹

The Eucharistic Sacrifice

The paragraph of the Methodist Statement which deals with commemoration (*Report*, p. 32, paragraph *b*) is relevant also to the subject of the eucharistic sacrifice. It speaks of ‘an act of remembrance by which, through the renewal of the corporate memory of the Church by the Holy Spirit, the great “salvation” events culminating in the Cross are re-enacted.’ In what sense re-enacted, one wonders. The answer to this question might at first glance seem to lie in the writings of C. H. Dodd, whose language is here echoed. ‘Corporate memory’ (compare also ‘corporate recollection’, a little lower in the same paragraph) is a phrase which Dodd uses to express an idea he adopts from a book by the philosopher C. C. J. Webb (*The Historical Element in Religion*), and in more than one place he applies it to the commemoration at the Holy Communion. In the context provided by the Methodist Statement the phrase is particularly reminiscent of a well-known passage from the appendix *Eschatology and History*, with which Dodd concludes his book *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*. He there says that in the eucharist

the Church reconstitutes the crisis of the coming of the kingdom, and is present at the Last Supper, at Golgotha, at the empty tomb, in the upper room, and also at Christ's coming with angels and archangels at the last trump; adding that sacramental communion is not a purely mystical experience, detached from history, but 'is bound up with a corporate memory of real events' (pp. 232-5). This passage is quoted by J. E. Rattenbury (*op. cit.*, p. 63 f.), and a similar passage, though without the phrase 'corporate memory', by J. C. Bowmer (*The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, p. 184), but the chief link with the words in the Statement is not provided by either of these writers: it is provided by Dr. Harold Roberts himself, the chairman of the group which produced the Statement. J. E. Rattenbury (*op. cit.*, p. 157 f.) quotes Dr. Roberts as speaking of the Holy Communion in the following way: '*Through the corporate memory of the historic Church, the mighty acts of redeeming love in the Cross and Resurrection of Christ our Lord are re-enacted*' (our italics). Dr. Roberts, as one who has written on the kingdom of God, is of course well versed in the works of C. H. Dodd, and might be expected to reflect his influence.

The meaning of Dodd's words is somewhat obscure when they are taken out of context, but is not too difficult to discern in the setting of the discourse to which they belong. 'Sacramental communion', he says, 'is not a purely mystical experience'—but this is not to deny that it is a mystical experience to some degree. On the contrary, the remembrance of Christ's saving work in the past and the expectation of His triumph in the future meet in His 'true presence' at the sacrament. In other words, it is not so much Christ's death, resurrection and return that are present in the eucharist, as the One who died, rose again and is to come, the One with whom in the sacrament Christians have mystical communion. This seems to be Dodd's meaning, and it is probably Dr. Roberts's meaning too. If he had been producing the Methodist Statement single-handed, this is perhaps as far as he would have wished to go.

Remembrance and Re-presentation

However, no part of the Methodist Statement ought to be understood in isolation from the rest, and the words we have

been tracing to their source have a significant sequel, in which we can probably discern the hand or at least the influence of Professor E. G. Rupp.¹⁰ For after speaking of the sacrament as 'an act of remembrance by which . . . the great "salvation" events culminating in the Cross are re-enacted', the Statement goes on, lower down the page, in one of the paragraphs dealing with the eucharistic sacrifice, to say: 'It is that [the sacrifice of Christ on the cross] we represent, and re-present and renew by our remembrance and communion' (paragraph *e*). The Holy Communion is thus an act of remembrance which not only 're-enacts' the sacrifice of the cross, but 're-presents' it. What does this mean?

Since we have already had some reason to suspect that the Statement has been influenced by Dix, it is a suggestive fact that Dix quotes the same passage from Dodd's appendix *Eschatology and History*, and reinterprets it, in accordance with his idea of *anamnesis*, as meaning that what is commemorated in the eucharist is made literally present.¹¹ Now, we have already noted how Dix emphasises (and in this he is followed once more by E. L. Mascall¹²) that what is made present by the eucharistic *anamnesis* is not primarily Christ's body and blood (though these are made present) but His saving death. Since the sacrament brings about what it signifies, it brings about Christ's sacrificial act performed on Calvary, and in so doing brings about also, of course, the presence of His body and blood (*The Shape of the Liturgy*, pp. 161 f., 254, and esp. 245 f.). Thus, the *anamnesis* is used by Dix to prove not just the real presence, but also the eucharistic sacrifice, though not in the same manner as in the older Anglo-Catholic theology.¹³ What is really striking, however, is that Dix¹⁴ and Mascall,¹⁵ returning to the etymological meaning of the word 'represent' (a traditional term of sacramental theology),¹⁶ call this making-present-again of Christ's death the 're-presenting' of His death, which is the very expression used in the Methodist Statement.¹⁷

No one will question that this choice of language is at least a remarkable coincidence. And there will be little difficulty in showing that it is more than a coincidence. For it was Dix who first made this language respectable. Not that Dix invented the term. Though 're-present' is a modern word-formation, it is to be found in at least two earlier Anglo-Catholic writers on

the eucharist, S. C. Gayford and F. C. N. Hicks. Gayford and Bishop Hicks worked closely together, and they use the word 're-present' in the more natural sense of 'present again' or 'offer again'. Employing the word in this sense, they both *deny* that Christ's death is 're-presented' in the eucharist,¹⁸ for to assert it would imply that the eucharist is a repetition of Calvary, a view which, though Anglo-Catholics often come perilously near to it, they nevertheless recognise to be indefensible. Dix, on the other hand, after redefining the word 're-present', is able to affirm that there is a re-presentation of Christ's death in the eucharist. And he has been followed in this affirmation not only by Mascall but also by at least six Methodist authors, including the three major writers on the eucharistic thought and practice of the Wesleys (J. E. Rattenbury,¹⁹ J. C. Bowmer²⁰ and J. R. Parris²¹) and one of the signatories of the Methodist Statement (Professor E. G. Rupp²²). It is safe to assert that no Methodist would have made such an affirmation before *The Shape of the Liturgy* appeared in 1945,²³ but since then these six have actually made it, Professor Rupp leading the way. The date of their utterances is sufficient to indicate the source from which they draw the expression, but any remaining doubt is dispelled by the fact that both Bowmer and Parris begin to use the word only after quoting a passage from *The Shape of the Liturgy* which contains it,²⁴ while C. W. Williams, who is chiefly dependant on Bowmer, adopts from the latter both the word and the quotation.²⁵

Let us now sum up the points of connection between the doctrine of the eucharistic sacrifice propounded by Dix and Mascall, and that since adopted in the Methodist Statement. First, both describe the eucharistic sacrifice as a re-enaction, not merely symbolical, of Christ's sacrifice on the cross (that the first quotation from the Methodist Statement adds the rest of Christ's saving work is in full agreement with the teaching of Dix and Mascall). Secondly, both base this sacrificial re-enaction on the eucharistic commemoration (that the second quotation from the Methodist Statement adds 'communion' to 'remembrance' may simply be intended to exclude the idea of non-communicating masses, which the modern Anglo-Catholic, one is thankful to say, does not favour either). Thirdly, to designate this re-enaction, both use Dix's peculiar term 're-present'.

Admittedly the Methodist Statement denies that the eucharistic sacrifice adds to the sacrifice of the cross or repeats it: paragraph *e*, taken as a whole, reads, 'The sacrament of Holy Communion is a sacrifice. Any view of the Eucharist that implies that the work of Christ was "unfinished" in the sense that we can add to it by anything we do, or that it needs to be done again, must be repudiated as unscriptural. The background of the Eucharist is the sacrifice of Christ, and Christ alone, on the Cross. It is that we represent, and re-present and renew by our remembrance and communion.' But there is nothing here that conflicts in the least with the teaching of Dix and Mascall. Indeed, what closer parallel could one find anywhere than Mascall's words 'The Eucharist is not a different sacrifice from that of Calvary, but the same sacrifice; in it Calvary is not repeated, nor is it added to, but it is re-presented' (*Christ, the Christian and the Church*, p. 182)? Is it not therefore a fair inference that the Methodist Statement intends to teach the same doctrine as Dix and Mascall—the doctrine that Christ's sacrifice is literally made present again at the eucharist, and that the eucharistic sacrifice is literally identical with His?²⁶

It is not so easy to argue here, as it was with the real presence, that this cannot be the meaning (at any rate the primary meaning) of the Methodist Statement, since Methodists do not in fact hold this doctrine. For the modern revival of Methodist interest in the Holy Communion has been centred round the idea of the eucharistic sacrifice, and until Parris's book appeared (too late to influence the Methodist Statement) the gulf that separates Wesley's sacrificial teaching from that of Anglo-Catholics seems to have been little appreciated by Methodist theologians. Bowmer is particularly unguarded. He supposes that Anglo-Catholicism has been misunderstood among Methodists,²⁷ and for his part he gives easy acceptance to most Anglo-Catholic ideas. His writings abound with conceptions and terms derived from the sacrificial teaching of Anglo-Catholics—Dix's theory of *anamnesis*, his word 're-present', the notion of the 'timelessness' of Calvary and the eucharist, and that of 'the Body of Christ offering the Body of Christ'.²⁸ And though Bowmer is an extreme case, he is not altogether unrepresentative. So even if in reality the authors of the Methodist Statement do not accept Dix's theory, no one is to know from their language

that they do not, since it clearly implies that they do. The most one can say is that, if they do not in actual fact accept Dix's doctrine of the real presence, they cannot consistently accept this aspect of his doctrine of the eucharistic sacrifice either. One hopes that they *are* consistent, and that they do not accept this aspect of his doctrine. But it remains possible that they accept the aspect of his doctrine considered on pages 83 to 87 below, which is not necessarily bound up with the real presence. While, if they do not accept his doctrine at all, it is surely beyond dispute that they ought to withdraw a Statement which teaches something quite different from what they really believe.

This, then, is the doctrine which the Methodist Statement appears to teach: that in the eucharist Christ's sacrificial death is re-enacted, and by the mysterious power of *anamnesis* is made present again. What are we to say to this theory? The first thing is, that it clearly is not the teaching of the Wesleys' eucharistic hymns. Is it the teaching of the New Testament? Three objections suggest themselves. First, we have already observed, when dealing with the real presence, that Dix's interpretation of the word *anamnesis*, upon which the whole theory rests, is extremely dubious.²⁹ Secondly, according to the New Testament conception of the eucharist, what is symbolised in the bread and wine is Christ's body already given for us, Christ's blood already shed for us, the one already separate from the other and in a condition of readiness for use in a post-sacrificial meal. In other words, it is not Christ's act of dying that is symbolised, but His state of death. To suggest that what is made present in the eucharist is His atoning act conflicts therefore with the symbolism of the rite.³⁰ Thirdly, though Mascall may plead,³¹ using a distinction derived ultimately from Aquinas,³² that Christ's death is made present again only according to the sacramental not the natural mode of being, such a distinction does not invalidate the objection that according to the New Testament Christ's death belongs exclusively to the past (Acts xiii, 34; Rom. vi, 9; Heb. ix, 25-8; Rev. i, 18). One is therefore bound to ask whether this teaching does not in effect assert (what in terms it denies) a repetition of Christ's death, thereby contradicting the sufficiency of His sacrifice on Calvary, obscuring His glory, hindering faith and imperilling salvation. Mascall would doubtless

reply, in agreement with the Council of Trent, that he does believe in the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary, and that the efficacy which he attributes to the eucharistic sacrifice is an efficacy derived from Calvary.³³ But how can he say this while he believes that the eucharistic sacrifice really is Calvary? If the eucharist is simply symbolic of Calvary, one can well understand that its efficacy is derivative. But if it really is Calvary, then its efficacy can no more be a derived efficacy than that of Calvary is. Mascall would further reply that Christ's death is not repeated in the eucharist because the acts of the divine Word are timeless (*Christ, the Christian and the Church*, pp. 171 f., 196-8). But to talk in this way is not only unbiblical, it is really without meaning. Whatever relation the pre-existent Christ may have borne to time, yet after His incarnation, and as Man, He was certainly in the realm of time, and His passion took place in time, just as the celebration of the eucharist takes place in time. To say that the passion is not repeated in the eucharist because the acts of Christ are timeless can therefore convey no intelligible idea to the mind, except perhaps a doubt of the reality of the incarnation.

Christ's Sacrifice and Ours

We have not yet considered all that the Methodist Statement has to say about the eucharistic sacrifice. Among its further declarations the most interesting are these: '(iii) The reality of the offering of ourselves to God in praise, thanksgiving, penitence and dedication will be determined by the degree to which we become united to Christ in his death. "The congregation or community of the saints is offered to God as our sacrifice through the great High Priest who offered himself to God in his passion for us, that we might be members of this glorious head"' (St. Augustine, *City of God*, chapter 6).

'(iv) The sacrifice offered by Christ on the Cross is eternal. Christ has entered beyond the veil to the heavenly place where his high priestly work continues without ceasing. He ever lives to make intercession for us as he pleads the one great sacrifice' (*Report*, p. 32 f.).

Both these paragraphs suffer from that ambiguity which the Methodist dissentients criticise: as in the case of baptismal regeneration, the dissentients consider that it should be made

clear what is meant by asserting the eucharistic sacrifice, and that certain interpretations of the phrase should be repudiated (*Report*, p. 61). Both the paragraphs are capable of being explained in accordance with the teaching of Brevint and the Wesleys, and this means that both are capable of being reconciled with the teaching of the New Testament. The danger is that, in the context of modern Anglo-Catholic teaching, to which the Methodist Statement has already shown a distinct inclination, they should be interpreted as expressing quite a different doctrine. Moreover, their ambiguity seems to reflect an inadequate appreciation of the seriousness of the difference, and, in as far as the difference is perceived, a willingness to accommodate both views.

In the case of paragraph (iii), the two divergent views for which it gives scope are the view that the self-oblation of Christians should be modelled on the self-oblation of Christ, through whose oblation it also finds acceptance with God; and the view which merges the one oblation into the other. Though the New Testament in many places speaks of Christ's death as a sacrifice, and in some speaks of the Christian as sharing in Christ's sufferings (that is, suffering in the same cause as Christ³⁴), or as dying with Christ *to the Law* and *to sin* (Rom. vi, 2, 11; vii, 4, 6; Gal. ii, 19; I Pet. ii, 24); though it speaks of the Christian as offering himself for a spiritual sacrifice (Rom. xii, 1) and elsewhere states that anything good he does is due to Christ living in him (Gal. ii, 20); yet it certainly does not identify his spiritual sacrifice with the sacrifice of Christ. To do so, as the Methodist Statement does, or as the Wesleys do in the fifth section of the eucharistic hymns and Brevint in the seventh section of the preface, is a daring extension of the metaphors of the New Testament, and unless it is very carefully qualified, can easily lead to serious errors. The all-important qualifications that Christ's sacrifice, unlike our sacrifice, belongs to the past not the present, was unblemished by sin, necessarily involved death, and atoned for mankind, are made perfectly clear by Brevint and the Wesleys in the places mentioned. The Methodist Statement, however, expounds its doctrine of the eucharistic sacrifice without making any allusion to them.

The quotation from Augustine extends another New Testament metaphor in the same direction, the metaphor which

describes Christians as members of the body of Christ. The chief ideas which St. Paul, the author of this figure of speech, uses it to express are the unity in diversity and the mutual dependance which exist among Christians, through the presence in them all of the one Spirit of Christ, from whom their various gifts come (Rom. xii, 4 f.; I Cor. xii, 4-31); also their common subjection to Christ and common dependence upon Him for growth into His likeness and into mutual love (Eph. iv, 15 f.; v, 22-4, 29 f.). The metaphor is a complex one, but to extend it to other fields of thought, though it may, with careful safeguards, be edifying,³⁵ is altogether unauthorised by the New Testament. It no more follows that because the Church is the body of Christ, therefore the Church's self-oblation is identical with Christ's, than it follows (as is argued by Roman Catholics³⁶) that because the Church is the body of Christ, therefore the Church, like Christ, is infallible. These conclusions would only follow if the Church's revealed identity with Christ were a literal one, instead of being a metaphorical expression of the fact that the Church is, in certain respects only, like Him. Some years ago, it was a common contention both among Roman Catholics and among Anglicans that the Church is literally and not metaphorically Christ's body, and among those who maintained this were Dix (*The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 246) and Mascall (*Christ, the Christian and the Church*, chs. 5-7). The idea was rejected in 1943 by Pope Pius XII in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi* (see *Encyclical Letter on the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ*, p. 51), and was later thoroughly refuted on exegetical grounds in E. Best's book *One Body in Christ*. Since Best's book appeared, it has not been so explicitly maintained, but the popular Anglo-Catholic notion that in the eucharist 'the Body of Christ offers the Body of Christ' or 'the whole Christ (Head and Members) offers the whole Christ', is still based upon this suppressed and discredited premiss. For to argue that the body of Christ which the Church offers in the eucharist (that is, itself) must be the same body of Christ which Christ offered on the cross, is to change the metaphorical identity of Christ and the Church into a literal identity. It is also to forget once more that the offering of Christ's natural body on the cross, unlike the offering of His mystical body in the eucharist, took place only in the past, was unimpaired by sin, necessarily involved death, and

atoned for mankind. And there is a further consideration (which was not mentioned earlier, with these other objections, but should not be overlooked) that the unique relation to the Church's self-offering which is here assigned to the eucharist, is assigned to it quite arbitrarily. The self-oblation of the Church is distinct from any ritual form. Its characteristic outward expression is not in ceremonial acts but in moral acts. In as far as the idea of self-oblation has a place in liturgy, it can well be expressed in a verbal prayer. While, as regards the sacraments, the idea is just as prominent in baptism as it is in the eucharist.

The conception of the eucharist as 'the Body of Christ offering the Body of Christ' or 'the whole Christ offering the whole Christ' could easily be the thought which the paragraph of the Methodist Statement now under consideration seeks to express. Indeed, when one reflects that the Methodist Statement has already accepted the idea of a 're-presentation' of Christ's sacrifice in the eucharist, and has accepted it from Dix and Mascall, who are champions also of this kindred idea;³⁷ when one notes that Dix and Mascall likewise appeal to Augustine in this connection, Dix quoting the very same passage as the Methodist Statement;³⁸ when one recalls that the notion has been introduced into Methodist theology by J. C. Bowmer;³⁹ and when, finally, one reflects that this idea is not, like that of 're-presentation', intimately bound up with the doctrine of the real presence in the elements, and so could present no obstacle to Methodists on that score; it seems on balance more likely than not that this is the thought which the present paragraph of the Methodist Statement is intended to express. But is it possible that the Methodist representatives should have adopted a view which by implication so compromises the atonement—either assimilating Christ's self-oblation to ours and so denying that it atones, or else assimilating our self-oblation to Christ's and so making us our own saviours? Unfortunately it is. For recent writing on the atonement, in its reaction against crude expressions of substitutionary and penal ideas, has so played down all that is unique and inimitable in Christ's sacrifice that it is common today to find not only Anglo-Catholics but Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists asserting that our self-oblation is identical with Christ's.⁴⁰ Among Methodists, Vincent Taylor, in his famous series of works on the atonement beginning with

Jesus and His Sacrifice in 1937, is similarly opposed to substitutionary teaching. The influence of Vincent Taylor on the Methodist advocates of the eucharistic sacrifice is sufficiently acknowledged by their enthusiastic commendation of his work,⁴¹ and his influence on the Methodist Statement can probably be discerned in its description of the eucharistic sacrifice as 'the glad return to God himself of the new life that has come to us from him through union with Christ in his self-offering' (*Report*, p. 32, paragraph ii, with which compare *Jesus and His Sacrifice*, pp. 312-24). One cannot but feel great respect for Vincent Taylor's achievement. Nevertheless, it has to be said, and is amply demonstrated in Leon Morris's book *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, that he presents a one-sided picture of New Testament teaching. It is impossible to exclude substitutionary ideas from a place—a prominent place—in the Biblical doctrine of the atonement. Christ, according to the New Testament, has by His sacrifice not only enabled us to do what we otherwise could not do: He has done for us what we cannot do at all. But this being so, one cannot speak of union with Christ in His self-oblation unless one qualifies the words in a manner in which neither Vincent Taylor nor the Methodist Statement seems willing to qualify them.⁴²

The Eternal Offering

The last passage of the Methodist Statement which we have to consider is the second of the two ambiguous paragraphs concerning the eucharistic sacrifice that are quoted above on page 83. Here again, the language of the Statement could on a certain interpretation be conformed to the teaching of the Wesleys and Brevint. They too, as we saw on pages 65 to 68, speak of Christ's sacrifice as eternal, and of Himself as the great High Priest ever pleading that sacrifice in heaven. What the Wesleys and Brevint mean by these statements we have already examined: 'eternal', as they use the word, means eternally efficacious, and therefore providing an eternal basis for prevailing prayer. In current Anglo-Catholic teaching, however, it means that the sacrifice itself goes on eternally. This doctrine (which should be carefully distinguished from the view, discussed on page 83 above, that Christ's sacrifice is timeless) was first broached in its modern form by Cardinal Manning as recently

as 1850, just before he left the Church of England;⁴³ but because of the support which it is supposed to find in the Epistle to the Hebrews, it has since gained ground not only in Anglican circles, but also to some extent outside.⁴⁴ The words of the Methodist Statement, that 'the sacrifice offered by Christ on the Cross is eternal', more naturally bear this sense than any other: the only reason why Brevint and the Wesleys could speak of Christ's sacrifice as eternal without danger of being thought to teach this doctrine, is that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was unheard of, except in the earlier and discredited form associated with the Socinians.

Since it is simply a denial of the finished character of the sacrifice of Christ, the theory we are considering cannot of itself establish the eucharistic sacrifice; but it removes the principal objection to that doctrine, and consequently Dix⁴⁵ and Mascall⁴⁶ both endorse it, Dix with great emphasis. They do not, however, like S. C. Gayford and others, make it their main argument, but base their affirmation of the eucharistic sacrifice (in so far as they base it on Scripture and not on tradition) equally if not chiefly on the grounds that we have already considered—the *anamnesis* and the doctrine of Christ's mystical body.

The theory that Christ's sacrifice is continued for ever in heaven is one of the most serious assaults which the historic doctrine of the atonement has ever had to endure. It therefore behoves us to examine its grounds with care. The notion is found to be based partly on the fact that the main function of priests in the Old Testament is not to slay sacrifices but to present them after they have been slain by their donors (from this the gratuitous conclusion is drawn that the presentation, not the slaying, is the main rite in a sacrifice);⁴⁷ and partly on the fact that the Epistle to the Hebrews locates Christ's priesthood primarily in heaven, where it begins at His ascension (*ch. viii, vv. 1 f., 4 f.*),⁴⁸ and apparently speaks of Him offering something there (*ch. viii, v. 3*). This something is by a comparison with *ch. ix, v. 7*, identified with the blood of His sacrifice, and on the view that blood stands in Scripture for life still continuing, not for life laid down in death, it is further identified with Himself. And since the devotion of Christ's life—of Himself—to His Father is nothing temporary, the final deduction made is that

according to the Epistle Christ's sacrifice (or rather the chief part of it, the priestly presentation in heaven) goes on for ever.⁴⁹

This interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews is a strange mixture of truth and error. It is doubtless true that the Epistle speaks of a priestly presentation of Christ's sacrifice in heaven. But it is suggested by the tenses in *ch. viii, v. 3*, that this took place once for all at His ascension, and lies as much in the past as does His death; which is confirmed by the numerous passages in which His sacrifice is spoken of as past and over—not only passages which speak of His sacrifice in general terms (*ch. i, v. 3*), but also passages which speak of it specifically under its priestly aspect (*ch. vii, v. 27*; *ch. ix, vv. 11 f., 25–8*; *ch. x, vv. 10–14, 18*). His continuing priestly work is not spoken of as sacrificial but as intercessory (*ch. vii, v. 24 f.*, with which compare *Ps. xcix, 6*; *Joel ii, 17*).

Again, it is true that the Epistle calls this presentation an 'offering', 'offer' being a word which is used equally in Scripture of the donor who provides and slays a sacrifice, and of the priest who presents it after it is slain. But, so far from regarding the priestly presentation in heaven as the chief part of Christ's sacrifice, the Epistle more than once identifies His sacrifice with His death (*ch. ix, vv. 14–17, 25–8*), affirming in these and other passages that it is His death which made atonement. All that was costly in Christ's sacrifice (the part of the donor and the victim) took place at the cross; there remained only the priestly part (the presentation of the sacrifice in the presence of God by an acceptable mediator) to be performed in heaven. The idea that the presentation of His shed blood was the presentation of His life still continuing, not of His life laid down in death, is certainly a mistaken one: it has been vigorously assaulted by A. M. Stibbs (*The Meaning of the Word 'Blood' in Scripture*) and by Leon Morris (*op. cit.*, *ch. 3*), and cannot be reconciled with the sacrificial and atoning significance which the Epistle attaches to His death. Nor is there any call to think of a *literal* presentation of Christ's person or His blood in heaven: it is enough that He entered as the priest of the sacrifice slain at the cross. In this respect, the presentation of Christ's sacrifice in heaven is closely akin to His heavenly intercession. For as, according to the received view, Christ intercedes by His simple presence (compare *ch. x, v. 21*), so it may well be that He presented His

sacrifice by His simple entrance. And this is supported by the fact that His entrance and His presence, His presentation of His sacrifice and His intercession, are combined in *ch. ix, v. 24*, under the simple idea of His 'appearing before the face of God for us'.

With this theory of the eternal offering, which, as was said above, the Methodist Statement does not explicitly endorse, but seems to do so by implication, we come to the end of the teaching which the Statement gives on the eucharistic sacrifice. But before concluding, we must say a word on the real relationship between sacrifice and the eucharist. In the eucharist we undoubtedly offer praise and thanksgiving—to give thanks being one of the instituted acts, and the service being instituted in remembrance of the Christian's great motive for thankfulness, the sacrifice of Christ. Sincere thanksgiving, moreover, involves the thankful offering of ourselves. The sacrifice of our goods is another appropriate expression of thankfulness, though not a necessary part of the service. And the sacrifice of prayer, which Brevint and the Wesleys so emphasised, is a further natural consequence of remembering Christ's death for our sins. Obedience is not actually called a spiritual sacrifice in the New Testament, but as a consequence of the Spirit's work in the heart it qualifies for that description, and the observance of the eucharist is fundamentally an act of obedience to Christ's command to 'do this', to 'eat' and to 'drink'. In these senses the eucharist is a sacrifice. But what is its relationship to the sacrifice of Christ?

As the New Testament so clearly indicates, if only it is suffered to speak for itself, the eucharist is not a repetition or continuation of Christ's sacrifice but a commemoration of it and a feast upon it. The commemorative aspect of the eucharist is generally recognised and (despite efforts to complicate it) generally understood, but this could scarcely be said of the conception of the eucharist as a post-sacrificial feast, though classical Anglican teaching is in general accordance with it. Post-sacrificial feasts are a prominent feature of Old Testament worship, and in all probability our Lord and His disciples were gathered for such a feast (that of the passover) on the occasion when He instituted the eucharist. At the very least, they had come to Jerusalem for the passover festival, of which the pass-

over meal was the climax. To understand such feasts, it is necessary to remember the Biblical attitude to meals in general. In Biblical times, to invite someone to a meal created a permanent obligation of friendship (Ps. xli, 9; Obad. 7; John xiii, 18). Meals were therefore used to inaugurate covenants, whether between man and man (Gen. xxvi, 28-31; xxxi, 44-54) or between God and man (Exod. xxiv, 5-11). In the latter case, if not in the former, the animals to be eaten were first offered in sacrifice to God, with the result that He became the Host, inviting men to His table, and that the sins of men were taken away by the shedding of blood before they approached (Heb. ix, 16-22). Such feasts not only inaugurated the Old Covenant, but played an important part in maintaining it. Thus, those who neglected the annual passover meal were rejected by God and became liable to the visitation of death (Exod. xii, 15, 19; Num. ix, 13). Now, in I Cor. x, 14-22, St. Paul compares such feasts with their pagan counterparts and with the Holy Communion, and he dwells upon the function of all of these in cementing *koinonia* (communion, fellowship, partnership) not just between worshipper and worshipper, but more especially between the worshippers and the deity (*vv.* 16f., 20). This is the same thing as cementing a covenant (St. Paul perhaps did not use the word because the pagans did not). Now, the covenant may be just as real, whether the sacrifice is eaten literally or under symbols. And it is because the New Covenant (the covenant inaugurated for believers by baptism), with all its spiritual blessings, is really maintained and renewed for them by the Holy Communion, that the Corinthians could not, without inconsistency, go from God's table to the table of a rival deity, thus trying to be in covenant with both at once. It follows that the Holy Communion is an important factor in salvation, but this in dependence on the sacrifice of Christ (which alone qualifies sinners for covenant relations with God), and without infringing on the distinct and unique significance of His sacrifice.⁵⁰

Conclusion

Our survey of those sections of the *Report* which concern priesthood and sacraments is now complete. Looking back over the ground that we have traversed, we are faced with a sorry sight. And we cannot but ask ourselves whether it is desirable, or even

possible, that when two churches of such positive, reformed traditions as the Methodist Church and the Church of England seek union, the agreed basis of faith upon which they proceed to unity should be a document like the *Report*. For the *Report* (or at any rate the sections of it which we have examined) has proved to be on two counts disqualified from filling such a role. First, both in its actual errors and also in its contradictions and ambiguities, it is lamentably hospitable to the denials and perversions of Biblical truth current in our day. And secondly, it comes into serious and repeated conflict with the authorised doctrinal standards of the two churches. But this being so, the *Report* is disqualified on yet a third score. For the doctrinal standards of the two churches, rightly interpreted, are in substantial agreement, and the *Report*, by contradicting the teaching of those standards, is ironically enough not promoting unity—far from it—but gravely disrupting such unity as already exists. The obvious course for the two churches is therefore to reject the common basis of faith as at present proposed, to re-examine the theological questions, and in re-examining them to give more attention to Scripture, to the formularies and to clarity of thought and language.

NOTES

¹ *The Shape of the Liturgy*, pp. 242 f., 264 f. Dix, who does not think of the second coming as future but as outside time, expresses the thought in a less bizarre way. It is remarked by N. A. Dahl in his article *Anamnesis* (in *Studia Theologica*, vol. I, 1947, p. 70) that *mnemoneuo* is used of a future event in Heb. xi, 22. But the prefix prevents *anamimnesko*, *anamnao* or *anamnesis* (the word with which we are concerned—see Luke xxii, 19; I Cor. xi, 24 f.) from being used in this way.

² *Theology*, vol. XXVIII (1934), p. 193, *The Parish Communion* (ed. A. G. Hebert), p. 120 f., *The Shape of the Liturgy*, pp. 161 f., 245.

³ *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 245 f. For possible sources of Dix's interpretation of *anamnesis*, see p. 96, n. 26, below.

⁴ *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, pp. 177–80; *The Lord's Supper in Methodism 1791–1960*, p. 54.

⁵ *John Wesley's Doctrine of the Sacraments*, p. 74 f. J. E. Rattenbury does not mention Dix in this connection, but attributes a similar idea to Wesley (*The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, pp. 20 f., 104 f.).

⁶ See J. C. Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, pp. 169–71, 186; *The Lord's Supper in Methodism 1791–1960*, p. 53; J. R. Parris, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–91. So also J. E. Rattenbury, *op. cit.*, p. 169. Even on Johnson's view, which Rattenbury and Bowmer attribute to Wesley (see p. 64 above), the presence is purely spiritual.

⁷ See Acts iii, 21; I Cor. xv, 25; Heb. x, 13.

⁸ The Roman Catholic doctrine of concomitance, adopted by some prominent Anglo-Catholic theologians, answers this difficulty only at the expense of making it still more doubtful whether the signs can be what they signify.

⁹ On the doctrine of the real presence, see further W. Goode, *The Nature of Christ's Presence in the Eucharist*; T. S. L. Vogan, *The True Doctrine of the Eucharist*; C. Ryder Smith, *The Sacramental Society*; J. Betz, *Die Realpräsenz des Leibes und Blutes Jesu im Abendmahl nach dem Neuen Testament*, etc.

¹⁰ The evidence on which this judgment is based will be found on p. 80. In making it, the writer is not unmindful of the words of E. W. Kemp, who says that the Methodist Statement was composed by one of its signatories and accepted by the rest (*The Anglican-Methodist Conversations: a Comment from Within*, p. 20). But this, presumably, is not to deny that small alterations may have been made at the suggestion of the other signatories.

¹¹ *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 263 f. A. G. Hebert, who, as we have seen, adopts Dix's idea of *anamnesis*, anticipates Dix in reading it into the words of C. H. Dodd (*The Parish Communion*, p. 10).

¹² *Corpus Christi*, p. 103; *Church Quarterly Review*, vol. CLXII (1961), p. 291 f.

¹³ For the older argument—that *anamnesis* or *eis anamnesin* (literally 'reminding' or 'to remind') implies a reminding of God and is technical sacrificial terminology—see D. Stone, *A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, vol. 1, pp. 9–11, and many other writers. The weaknesses of the theory are the paucity of favourable evidence, the use made of this language

in Wisd. xvi, 6 and Heb. x, 3, and the deliberate exposition of our Lord's words in terms of preaching given by St. Paul in I Cor. xi, 26. Dix still speaks of the *anamnesis* as before God, but his argument is basically quite different.

¹⁴ *The Shape of the Liturgy*, pp. 161 f., 245.

¹⁵ *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, *passim*; *Corpus Christi*, p. 94; *Church Quarterly Review*, vol. CLXII (1961), p. 290.

¹⁶ The basic meaning of the Latin word *repraesentare* is 'to make present again', and, together with its cognates, it is sometimes used in this sense by medieval writers and by Roman Catholic writers of the Reformation period in connection with the mass. See F. Clark, *Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Reformation*, pp. 264-6. The examples of this usage cited by H. A. Oberman (*The Harvest of Mediaeval Theology*, p. 273) are more doubtful.

¹⁷ Since Dix's teaching is so important for our enquiry, it will be well to quote some specimens of it: 'This word [*anamnesis*], which the Authorized Version translates as "Do this in remembrance of Me" in the New Testament accounts of the institution, . . . is not quite easy to represent accurately in English, words like "remembrance" or "memorial" having for us a connotation of something itself *absent*, which is only mentally recollected. But in the scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, *anamnesis* and the cognate verb have the sense of "re-calling" or "re-presenting" before God an event in the past, so that it becomes *here and now operative by its effects*' (*The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 161). This last phrase is an example of Dix's virtualist language. The context, not to mention the general outlook of the writer, shows that it is not intended to have a virtualist meaning, however. 'One has only to examine their [the early Fathers'] unfamiliar language closely to recognise how completely they identify the offering of the eucharist by the church with the offering of Himself by our Lord, not by way of a repetition, but as a "re-presentation" (*anamnesis*) of the *same* offering by the church "which is His Body". . . . The whole rite "re-calls" or "re-presents" before God not the last supper, but the sacrifice of Christ in His death and resurrection; and it makes this "present" and operative by its effects in the communicants' (*op. cit.*, p. 162). 'For him [Chrysostom] as for his predecessors in the pre-Nicene church, it is the absolute unity of the church's sacrifice in the eucharist with that of Christ . . . it is the indissoluble *unity of the eucharist with the sacrifice of Christ Himself* which is the basis of the ancient eucharistic theology. . . . It was as obvious to the senses in the first or second century as it is today that from offertory to communion these gifts retain their physical qualities, all the experienced reality of bread and wine. Yet no language could be more uncompromising than that of the second century writers (and indeed that of the New Testament) about "discerning the Lord's Body"—as to the fact that what is received in communion is the Body and Blood of Christ. There is no hesitation, no qualification . . . In Irenaeus' younger contemporaries, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and Hippolytus, we begin for the first time to meet with language which seeks to take explicit account of this persistence of the physical realities of bread and wine in the consecrated sacrament . . . But the use of such language should not mislead us into supposing that it betokens any change of doctrine from the naïve "realism" of the earlier period. . . . In much Western teaching—certainly in much modern Anglican teaching—there is an exact reversal of the whole primitive approach to the question. We are inclined to say that because by consecration the bread and wine become in some sense the Body and Blood of Christ, therefore what the church does with

them in the eucharist must be in some sense what He did with them, namely an offering. And our doctrine about the reality of the offering will be found to vary in its "realism" or "symbolism" precisely in accordance with the "realism" or "symbolism" of our doctrine of the Presence by consecration. We make the sacrifice dependent on the sacrament. But the primitive church approached the matter from the opposite direction. They said that because the eucharist is essentially an action and the church in doing that action is simply Christ's Body performing His will, the eucharistic action is necessarily His action of sacrifice, and what is offered must be what He offered. The consequences of His action are what He declared they would be: "This is My Body" and "This is My Blood". They made the sacrament depend upon the sacrifice. It is obvious that such a view requires us to take the phrase "the Body of Christ" as applied both to the church and to the sacrament not merely as a metaphor, however vivid, but as a reality, as the truth of things in God's sight. Both church and sacrament must *be* what they are called, if the church's act is to be truly Christ's act, her offering His offering, and the effects of His sacrifice are to be predicated of the present offering of the eucharist. And we find that the primitive church showed nowhere the least hesitation about accepting the phrase "Body of Christ" in both its senses as expressing an absolute truth and not merely a metaphor. In this the church went no further than the New Testament. Consider for a moment the implications, *e.g.*, of I Cor. vi, 15. . . . Or again, I Cor. xi, 28 *sq.* . . . This is pressing the *physical* truth of the phrase "Body of Christ" in either sense about as far as it will go. . . . It is the firm grasp of the whole early church upon this twofold meaning and twofold truth of the phrase "Body of Christ" and their combination in the eucharist which accounts for those remarkable passages, commonest in S. Augustine but found also in other writers, which speak almost as though it was the church which was offered and consecrated in the eucharist rather than the sacrament' (*op. cit.*, pp. 244-8). ' . . . in the overwhelming majority of writers it is made clear that their whole conception revolves round the figure of the High-priest at the altar in heaven. . . . It [the eucharist] is the perpetuation in time by way of *anamnesis* of His eternally accepted and complete redeeming act' (*op. cit.*, p. 253 f.).

¹⁸ See S. C. Gayford, *Sacrifice and Priesthood, Jewish and Christian*, p. 174, and F. C. N. Hicks, *The Fulness of Sacrifice*, p. 335.

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 21, 122, 132, 135, 144.

²⁰ *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, pp. 178, 182, 185 f.; *The Lord's Supper in Methodism 1791-1960*, p. 14.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 76.

²² *The Holy Communion: a Symposium* (ed. H. Martin), p. 124. The other two authors are C. W. Williams (*John Wesley's Theology Today*, pp. 159, 161, 163) and P. Scott (in *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, vol. CLXXXIV, 1959, p. 107).

²³ For a partial anticipation of this language in an earlier Methodist writer, see A. H. W. Harrison in A. J. Macdonald (ed.), *The Evangelical Doctrine of Holy Communion* (1930), p. 290. Using the term in the sense of 'offer again' presumably, he says that according to the Wesleys the eucharist is 'a re-presentation in picture of the sacrifice of Calvary'. The great difference between this use of the term and the modern use is, of course, that here the eucharist is said to be 'a re-presentation in picture', that is, a *symbolical* re-presentation.

²⁴ See J. C. Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*,

p. 178; J. R. Parris, *op. cit.*, p. 74. Bowmer, incidentally, appears to misunderstand what Dix means by the word. He seems to take it in the sense of 'offer again', a sense in which, as we have seen, even Anglo-Catholics are shy to assert that Christ's death is 're-presented'. And when he states that this is the teaching of the Wesleys in their eucharistic hymns, he is of course completely astray. According to Brevint and the Wesleys, Christ's sacrifice can never be offered *again*, only offered *in a different sense*. Dr. Harold Roberts has now joined Bowmer in thus misinterpreting the word (*Anglican-Methodist Conversations: Summary and Exposition of the Official Report*, p. 23). This tends to confirm our conjecture on p. 78 that the word was not introduced into the Methodist Statement at his instance.

²⁵ For the quotation, see *John Wesley's Theology Today*, p. 160. In justice to Williams, it ought to be said that he appears to understand the meaning of the quotation better than Bowmer does, since in one place he attributes the re-presenting not to man, as elsewhere, but to God (*op. cit.*, p. 159).

²⁶ In view of these points of connection, it is much more probable that the Methodist Statement derives its teaching on the eucharistic sacrifice from Dix and his followers than from other recent writers who propound similar theories. Such are the German Benedictine Dom. Odo Casel, who interprets the sacraments by the pagan mysteries, but attempts to make the relationship a respectable one (see *Das Christliche Kultmysterium* and other of his writings, which through the Liturgical Movement have had much influence on continental Roman Catholics), and S. Mowinckel, who, writing of Old Testament worship, and interpreting it on the basis of other Near Eastern cults not altogether dissimilar in character, claims that it is conceived not just as a commemoration but as an actualization and renewal of the great redemptive events of the past. Mowinckel's theory has been adopted in substance by a good many modern Old Testament scholars: for a recent exposition and a bibliography see B. S. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel*, chs. 6 and 7. A somewhat similar idea is propounded by J. Pedersen in connection with the Hebrew word *zekher*. In Old Testament thought, according to Pedersen, a person's memorial or name makes him present, and this is the case when God is remembered and named in worship (*Israel: its Life and Culture*, parts 1-2, p. 256 f.). Pedersen's theory, if transferred to the New Testament, would not imply more than a spiritual presence of Christ at the eucharist (and at other services). Mowinckel's theory, if it could be similarly transferred, would come nearer to Dix's intention. But Dix gives no sign of having been influenced by either, though it seems quite likely that he was influenced to some extent by his fellow-Benedictine Casel, who anticipated his interpretation of the word *anamnesis* as a 'making present' (see, for example, p. 53 of *The Mystery of Christian Worship and other writings*—a recent translation of some of Casel's works; see also p. 83 of the article *Anamnesis* by N. A. Dahl, a disciple of Casel and Dix, which was mentioned earlier).

²⁷ *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, p. ix; *The Lord's Supper in Methodism 1791-1960*, p. 56.

²⁸ *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, ch. 12; *The Lord's Supper in Methodism 1791-1960*, pp. 14 f., 54-6. The writer regrets having to criticise Bowmer so frequently, since he seems to be a good historian. He is not, unfortunately, nearly so safe a guide as a theologian.

²⁹ See p. 74 f. above.

³⁰ Unless, of course, Christ's death is symbolised in the fraction. It is difficult to exclude such a symbolism from the traditional text of I Cor. xi,

24, but Dix himself is emphatic that the idea does not go back to the beginning (*The Shape of the Liturgy*, pp. 80 f., 132 f., etc.).

³¹ *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, ch. 10; *Corpus Christi*, pp. 94-107, etc. Mascall offers a much fuller exposition and defence of the theory than Dix, and in fairness we must take account of his arguments.

³² *Summa Theologica*, pt. 3, qu. 81, art. 4.

³³ Decrees of Trent, session 22, ch. 2. And this seems to be the implication of Mascall's teaching in *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, ch. 10, and in *Corpus Christi*, ch. 4.

³⁴ The oft-quoted words of Col. i, 24, are very likely to be understood in this sense. The underlying thought would then be that of Matt. x, 24 f. and John xv, 20. The afflictions of Christ can only be said to lack something if this is a figurative expression for the afflictions of Paul (or of the Church), suffered in the same cause as Christ's afflictions. That they are suffered by one in whom (as in the whole Church) Christ's Spirit dwells, may also be in St. Paul's mind. But Christ's literal sufferings, and the atonement wrought by them, are according to St. Paul's teaching already complete (see Rom. vi, 9 f., and compare in Colossians itself ch. i, vv. 20-2; ch. ii, vv. 13-15). The fact that Paul's afflictions are here said to be for the sake of the Church cannot therefore mean that they help to atone for the Church's sins, which would also be hard to reconcile with the teaching of the parallel passage II Cor. i, 6 (where the benefit the Church derives from Paul's sufferings is set side by side with the benefit it derives from his comfort), and totally at variance with the New Testament doctrine of the atonement. Of course, if 'the afflictions of the Christ' means 'the Messianic woes' (the woes that attend the coming of the Messiah), there is no problem.

³⁵ See, for example, R. C. Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, pp. 246-57, who gives beautiful expression to the idea that the love which the members of the mystical body derive from their Head is alike the essence of His sacrifice and of theirs. Moberly, however, does not safeguard the idea, but makes Christ's death incidental to His sacrifice, and plays down all that distinguishes His sacrifice from ours.

³⁶ For references, see G. C. Berkouwer, *The Conflict with Rome*, pp. 20-9.

³⁷ See G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 247 f.; E. L. Mascall, *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, p. 162; *Church Quarterly Review*, vol. CLXII (1961), pp. 286 f., 289 f.

³⁸ Dix, incidentally, gives the correct reference. The passage quoted comes from the sixth chapter in book 10 of Augustine's *City of God*.

³⁹ *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, pp. 183, 186. He attempts once more to father the idea upon the Wesleys.

⁴⁰ See, for example, T. W. Manson, *Ministry and Priesthood: Christ's and Ours*, pp. 29 f., 61, 63 f., 70 f.; H. H. Rowley, *The Unity of the Bible*, pp. 181-6; and the proposed *Congregational Declaration of Faith*, p. 30.

⁴¹ See J. E. Rattenbury, *op. cit.*, p. 82; J. C. Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, p. 174; *The Lord's Supper in Methodism 1791-1960*, p. 55; E. G. Rupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 121, 125. The influence of Vincent Taylor is perhaps responsible also for the fact that all these writers, and even J. R. Parris too, find themselves able to accept Dix's theory of a 're-presentation' of Christ's sacrifice in the eucharist—see pp. 74 f., 80-2 above.

⁴² It is not always realised what a secure place the substitutionary and penal idea of the atonement has in the formularies of the two churches. For the Church of England, see Article 31 and the homily *Of the Salvation*

of *Mankind*, part 1. In the standards of the Methodist Church, the fifth of *The Forty-four Sermons* treats it as the heart of the gospel, while the *Notes on the New Testament*, commenting on Rom. iii, 25, state that the purpose of Christ's death was 'to appease an offended God', adding that the 'essential character and principal office' of God's 'vindictive justice' is 'to punish sin', for 'if, as some teach, God never was offended . . . Christ died in vain'. Nor are these the only places where such teaching is found. It should not, of course, be supposed that what these statements teach is a dead letter in the Church of England, any more than in the Methodist Church. For not only has it wide Evangelical support, but it is endorsed not obscurely in the report *Doctrine in the Church of England* (pp. 90-3), and is maintained by various Anglo-Catholics, including E. L. Mascall (*Christ, the Christian and the Church*, pp. 74-6).

⁴³ For the early history of the theory, see T. S. L. Vogan, *op. cit.*, pp. 448-73. (Vogan does not note, however, that it had been in large measure anticipated by the Socinians, who were not, of course, interested in maintaining the mass, but simply in destroying the orthodox doctrine of the atonement: see H. H. Meeter, *The Heavenly High Priesthood of Christ*, pp. 7-15; A. G. Mortimer, *The Eucharistic Sacrifice*, *passim*). It is a genuinely Anglo-Catholic theory, and has never had much support in the Church of Rome. Such support as Roman Catholic writers do supply, and alleged patristic precedents, are canvassed by A. G. Mortimer in the work just mentioned, which is supplemented by F. Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 269 f.

⁴⁴ Chiefly in the Church of Scotland: see W. Milligan, *The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord*; G. Milligan, *The Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*; and D. M. Baillie, *The Theology of the Sacraments*, pp. 116-24.

⁴⁵ *The Shape of the Liturgy*, pp. 242 f., 251-4.

⁴⁶ *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, p. 181 f.

⁴⁷ A priest is admittedly greater than a donor, in that he has all the rights of a donor, and the right of presenting sacrifices in addition. But this proves nothing about the point at issue. Again, it is the priestly presentation of a sacrifice that is said to make atonement (Lev. iv, 20, 26, 31, 35; v, 10, 16, 18; vi, 7, etc.). But this is only possible on the basis of the slaying. The slaying is indeed nothing without acceptable presentation of the blood, but with it the slaying may well be everything.

⁴⁸ The Epistle always speaks of Christ as priest, not as donor, whether it is His death or His heavenly ministry that is chiefly in mind. A possible explanation is that in the relevant passages His heavenly ministry is never entirely out of view, and consequently He is always given the more honourable title.

⁴⁹ The arguments from Revelation are hardly worth considering. The Lamb 'as though it had been slain' (*ch. v, v. 6*) is not lying bleeding but is apparently just scarred, for He is said to be standing, and comes to take the book. 'The Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world' (*ch. xiii, v. 8*) is probably an invention of translators (see R.V. margin and commentaries), but if this rendering is retained, the most likely interpretation is 'slain in God's predestinating purpose from the foundation of the world'.

⁵⁰ Thus, to use the ordinary terminology of eucharistic theology, the theory of the eucharist which seems to agree best with New Testament teaching is virtualism. Christ is really present at the eucharist as regards His Spirit (see p. 77 above), but only virtually present as regards His sacrificed flesh and blood. This, however, is no disparagement to the eucharist, since the virtue and effect of feasting on Christ's sacrifice (that is,

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the blessings of the covenant) are as truly realised through partaking of the symbols of bread and wine as they would be through a literal participation of Christ's flesh and blood. On the doctrine of the eucharistic sacrifice, see further T. S. L. Vogan, *The True Doctrine of the Eucharist*; N. Dimock, *The Sacerdotium of Christ and Our One Priest on High*; S. C. Gayford, *Sacrifice and Priesthood, Jewish and Christian*; A. M. Stibbs, *The Finished Work of Christ*; J. I. Packer (ed.), *Eucharistic Sacrifice*, etc.

APPENDIX

INTERCOMMUNION

IT may be thought surprising that no reference has been made to intercommunion. The reason is that this issue, unlike the others which we have been considering, is regarded by the negotiators as a matter of practice rather than of doctrine, and consequently does not figure in the theological chapters of the *Report*. However, in view of its importance and its doctrinal implications it ought not to be ignored altogether.

The subject of intercommunion is at present very obscure. In the Church of England, as in some at least of the Free Churches, there has been no one traditional attitude towards intercommunion with other English denominations,¹ and today also there is on the one hand the majority in Convocation which refuses its approval to intercommunion with churches lacking the 'historic episcopate', and on the other hand the thirty-two theologians whose *Open Letter* caused such a stir in 1961.² Practice, moreover, varies from parish to parish.

A further complication is the fact that the majority report and the Dissentient View seem to be at cross purposes on the subject. The majority report says: 'We believe that the preservation of the relations of inter-communion which Methodism now enjoys with other non-episcopal Churches is of great importance. To interfere with that relationship would almost certainly prevent the Methodist Church from accepting episcopacy. It is our prayer that this situation will be resolved by fruitful conversations between the Anglican Church and the other Free Churches towards an ultimate organic union that will be wider than we have yet conceived' (*Report*, p. 55). Since episcopacy is to be accepted by the Methodist Church at Stage One of the proposed union (*Report*, pp. 9, 35, 51, etc.), and since those who proceed to Stage One are committed to Stage Two also (*Report*, p. 9)³, the implication is that before even Stage One (the stage of intercommunion) is reached, the Church of England must

officially sanction on its own behalf intercommunion with those Free Churches (and overseas churches) which are already in communion with the Methodist Church. Otherwise the Methodist Church would be accepting episcopacy, and the obligation to amalgamation, at Stage Two, with the Church of England, while still without any assurance that at the stage of amalgamation its relations of intercommunion (and full communion) with other churches would not break down, because no intercommunion (or full communion) existed between these churches and the Church of England.⁴

What steps the Church of England is taking in this urgent matter of initiating intercommunion (and full communion) with the other Free Churches (and with non-episcopal churches generally), one wonders.⁵ The Methodist dissentients (*Report*, p. 61) clearly suppose either that it is taking none, or that any steps it takes will inevitably lead nowhere, if it proceeds upon the same sort of theological principles and imposes the same pre-conditions (acceptance of episcopacy and what amounts to the re-ordination of ministers) as it has done in the present report. The dissentients evidently expect no change of attitude here, for they conclude that the actual course of events, should the present proposals be accepted, would be the following: at Stage One, the establishment of intercommunion between the Church of England and the Methodist Church, but not between the Church of England and the Free Churches at present in communion with the Methodist Church; and at Stage Two, the incorporation of the Methodist Church with the Church of England, involving the cessation of intercommunion between the united church and those churches with which the Methodist Church, but not the Church of England, is at present in communion.

One hopes that the dissentients are taking too gloomy a view of Anglican policy, but one fears that they may not be. It is true that the scheme for church union in Nigeria, which L. Davison cites (in *Unity: a Discussion by Church Leaders*, p. 32 f.), and which has since been approved by the Lambeth Consultative Committee (see *Church Times*, 15 May 1964), shows the breakdown of intercommunion with non-episcopal churches not to be a necessary concomitant of this kind of scheme. But it remains a distinct possibility, and it will continue to be such

until the Church of England repudiates the policy which its negotiators attributed to it in the preliminary discussions with the Free Churches embodied in the 1950 report *Church Relations in England*;⁶ declares its willingness to follow the lead of the Anglican Church in Nigeria by seeking intercommunion and full communion with non-episcopal churches; and brings to a successful conclusion the negotiations to this end which at present it gives no sign even of opening.

Opposition to Intercommunion

The question of intercommunion is still further complicated by the fact that Anglicans opposed to the practice have changed their ground as a result of the Oxford Movement. The 1603 Canons excommunicate those who speak evil of the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England or commit schism against it. And prior to the Oxford Movement, Anglicans who objected to the custom of occasional communion by Nonconformists⁷ sometimes objected to it on the ground that Nonconformists were guilty of such offences as these; whereas Anglicans who encouraged the custom maintained that if the Nonconformists in question had really been schismatics, and hostile to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, they would not have wished to take part in its communion services even occasionally.⁸ It certainly seems unjust to treat as schismatics those Nonconformists who were driven out of the Church of England by repressive legislation or persecution, especially when one reflects that the Free Churches now have a lawful status alongside the establishment, and that their members are, generally speaking, more willing than ever to communicate in the Church of England, and to admit Anglicans to their own communion tables. It is arguable that in the matter of schism Nonconformists compare favourably with Anglicans. On the other hand, Nonconformists (even Methodists) have traditionally been critical of the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, and the Canons (though subsequent legislation has here abated their force) hardly permit one to criticise at all without becoming liable to excommunication. Consequently, those Anglicans who opposed intercommunion on the old grounds could make out a case from the Canons, even if they could not do so from Scripture.

But in point of fact the old arguments for exclusiveness have, with changed circumstances, been largely dropped. As C. S. Carter points out (*Ministerial Commission*, pp. 89, 95), there have been many important changes in the situation. Thus, it is recognised today by almost all Anglicans that the responsibility for the post-Reformation schisms certainly cannot be laid wholly at the door of the Nonconformists, who in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were pressed with the demands of a uniformity more rigid than anyone now thinks necessary, and in the eighteenth century were hounded out of the Church by men who had much less right to be regarded as good Anglicans than themselves. In any case, it has always been appreciated that the guilt of schism does not belong to those who inherit divisions in the same measure as to those who create them; and it would be foolish to suppose that the Free Churches can now just discard their long and distinctive heritage, and conform to the Church of England once more. On the Free Church side, it is generally recognised nowadays that some of the issues on which their forefathers contended most earnestly (for example, the sign of the cross in baptism, the surplice, and the kneeling position at the reception of communion) were of little importance, and that some of the chief controversial positions they took up in opposition to the Church of England (denying, for example, the validity of its orders and sacraments, the lawfulness of episcopacy or that of liturgical prayer) cannot be maintained. It would be unreasonable as well as uncharitable, therefore, if Anglicans were to act as though circumstances were unchanged, and consequently the old charges of schism and evil-speaking are scarcely ever levelled at the Free Churches today.

Anglo-Catholic Opposition

This does not mean, however, that the Church of England is now ready to treat the Free Churches in the same way as it always used to treat the Protestant churches abroad, on a basis of equality. For since the rise of the Oxford Movement new reasons for exclusiveness have been found. The more the Anglo-Catholics departed from the historic Protestantism of the Church of England, the more they came into conflict with the teaching of the other reformed churches. But their opposition to intercommunion is grounded not only on the teaching of

those churches, but also on their practice with regard to confirmation and ordination. Churches which are without bishops in the 'apostolic succession', so Anglo-Catholics maintain, have neither true confirmation nor valid ordination: it is impossible, therefore, that Anglicans should either admit their members to the Lord's table (not being episcopally confirmed) or accept communion at the hands of their ministers (who, not being validly ordained, cannot validly administer it). These arguments, unlike the older ones, can make no more plausible claim to be Anglican than they can to be scriptural. Insistence on the necessity of episcopacy to a valid administration of the means of grace is contrary to traditional Anglican teaching⁹ and has no place in the Anglican formularies; while the appeal to the final rubric of the Prayer Book confirmation service, as making confirmation a prerequisite for admission to communion, is an attempt to extend a domestic regulation of the Church of England to those who are members of other churches.¹⁰ The Anglo-Catholic arguments are also of much greater scope. For whereas the charges of schism and vilification were only meaningful if applied to Nonconformists in this country, the Anglo-Catholic contentions are directed also against the Protestant churches abroad.

One observes with regret that the majority report makes considerable concessions to these novel and un-Anglican contentions—not, indeed, in the matter of confirmation, but in the matter of bishops and episcopal ordination. With regard to confirmation, the *Interim Statement* (p. 44) promised a full examination of the subject before specific proposals for union were made. The present report contains no trace of such an examination. However, one notes that in the report *Church Relations in England*, produced, as a result of preliminary negotiations, in 1950, the Anglican representatives contented themselves with expressing the hope that in any Free Church with which, after the adoption of episcopacy, the Church of England established intercommunion, episcopal confirmation would become general; and gave it as their opinion that this would not be a condition of intercommunion on which the Church of England would insist (p. 45). The present negotiators evidently did not think fit to go back on such an assurance, even though those who extended it do not appear to have been altogether

unanimous (*op. cit.*, p. 40). In the matter of bishops and episcopal ordination, on the other hand, the present negotiators have granted the Anglo-Catholic all that he could ask. There is to be no intercommunion with Methodists until they have accepted bishops in the apostolic succession, and until their existing ministers have submitted to what is really episcopal ordination.

The course of the negotiations leading up to this demand is illuminating. In the preliminary discussions with the Free Churches in general, the Anglican representatives took an essentially Anglo-Catholic line, and maintained that an Anglican, even when visiting a non-episcopal church, will not accept communion from a minister who has not been episcopally ordained. This representation of Anglicanism was entirely unauthorised by the formularies of the Church of England, and was contrary to its history of intercommunion, unchallenged until quite recently, with the Protestant churches on the Continent and the Church of Scotland.¹¹ But on this basis it was concluded in the report *Church Relations in England* that even if the Free Churches were to adopt episcopacy, they could not have more than restricted intercommunion with the Church of England, since Anglicans would only accept communion from those Free Church ministers who had been ordained after the adoption of episcopacy (p. 44 f.). The implication of course was that it would be impossible to establish unrestricted intercommunion (in the sense of readiness not only to admit all communicants from the other church to the Lord's table, but also to receive communion in the other church at the hands of any of its ministers), full communion (in the sense of readiness on the part of the one church to permit any clergyman ordained in the other church to administer communion in its congregations) or actual union, without a reordination of Free Church ministers.¹²

This was the state of the question in 1956, when the present negotiations began. The Methodist representatives were naturally concerned to make the best of the conditions laid down by the Anglicans, and the decision they took is in the circumstances not surprising. They decided that, if a union of churches was to be their ultimate aim, they could cut their losses by accepting straight away whatever minimum form of reordination the Anglicans might require (they would have to accept it sooner

or later), and by establishing in this way unrestricted intercommunion, indeed full communion, during the interim period before union was achieved. Their senior ministers would not then be put in the humiliating position of having their ministrations refused by Anglicans (that is, by Anglo-Catholics) while the ministrations of junior ministers were accepted. And the Methodist Church would not be adopting episcopacy (with 'the great constitutional and other changes' involved) for so small a return as restricted intercommunion. They may also have comforted themselves that they would not for their part regard the imposed rite as reordination, whatever view the Anglicans might take of it, and some of them may even have hoped that the Anglicans would not press their demand for such a rite. But if so, they were doomed to be disappointed. The Anglican negotiators, for reasons of their own, also desired a unification of ministries from the outset, and hence a change of plan was with general agreement adopted. A record of the whole transaction is included in the *Interim Statement*, on pages 40 to 42.

The Service of Reconciliation

A direct result of this change of plan was the drawing up of the Service of Reconciliation. What does the service imply? Its background would naturally suggest that it implies reordination, and its form (the laying on of episcopal hands, with words about admission to the office of priest) seems strongly to support this interpretation. But some might think that if the majority of the Methodist negotiators do not understand the rite as an ordination (the dissentients, be it noted, do)¹³ it cannot be an ordination. This would undoubtedly be the case if the Methodists had played a full part in the composition of the relevant part of the service, and had made sure that it expressed their views. It is clear, however, from the words of the Methodist dissentients (*Report*, p. 59 f.), and still clearer from the words of one of them elsewhere (Dr. N. H. Snaith, in *Conversations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church: Comments and Criticisms*, p. 26 f.), that this is not what happened. The laying on of episcopal hands and the interpretative words accompanying it were not introduced at the mutual wish of the Anglicans and the Methodists, but at the demand of the Angli-

cans. Some of the Methodists gave in to the demand, but four of them refused.¹⁴

It is, of course, still possible for those Methodists who signed the majority report to deny that the service confers episcopal ordination, and their chairman, Dr. Roberts, in his *Anglican-Methodist Conversations: Summary and Exposition of the Official Report* (p. 30), does deny it. Here again the *Report* makes free use of ambiguous language, and it refrains from explicitly stating that reordination is intended. But the implications of the proposals are clear enough, if one is willing to face them, and not all the Methodist signatories of the majority report feel able to go as far as their chairman. Thus, P. H. Race contents himself with asserting that the service *need* not be regarded as ordination, though it *can* (*Conversations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church: Comments and Criticisms*, p. 23 f.), and Professor Greenslade, an Anglican signatory and a Liberal Evangelical, takes the same view (*op. cit.*, p. 10). This view is no way inconsistent with the reasonable claim made by the Anglo-Catholic signatory E. W. Kemp, whose words clearly imply that the service is conditional ordination—conditional in effect, though not of course in form (*The Anglican-Methodist Conversations: a Comment from Within*, p. 40). That Kemp is not speaking for himself alone but for the Anglican negotiators as a body seems clear from Dr. N. H. Snaith's statement that when he and the other dissentients asked why there had to be a laying on of hands, they were told that 'it was to add "what-ever might be lacking in anybody's ordination"' (*Conversations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church: Comments and Criticisms*, p. 26). This is a plain admission that conditional ordination and conditional supplementation of ordination is intended, and by consequence that the episcopal laying on of hands has an ordaining significance. Moreover, Kemp's words to the same effect are now reported to have been adopted by the Bishop of Winchester, one of the Liberal Evangelicals among the Anglican signatories (see the *Church of England Newspaper*, 19 June 1964). What was said by the Archbishop of Canterbury, when addressing the Methodist synod at Canterbury on 4 March 1964, is also to the point: 'The service is not called an Ordination. That is because it avoids passing judgments about the status in the eyes of God of existing ministries.

There may be differences of belief about their precise status. But it is the conviction of those who set forward these proposals, and my own conviction, that all who emerge from it will be without distinction priests in the Church of God with authority for the functions of a priest' (as reported in the *English Churchman*, 13 March 1964). Presumably, if they have told no one else, the Anglican negotiators have told the Archbishop of Canterbury what they intend by their service, and he clearly understands it to be a conditional ordination, upon which a man's possession of 'priesthood' may depend.¹⁵

Nor is this simply a matter of the negotiators' intention: it is what their proposals definitely imply. For, first, the negotiators are expressly aiming at a unification of ministries from the outset, such that the ministrations of the existing Methodist clergy will be acceptable even to Anglo-Catholics, whose scruples would place them in an anomalous position if the original scheme for intercommunion were followed (see especially the *Interim Statement*, pp. 40-2). But the present scheme does nothing to meet such scruples unless the Service of Reconciliation confers episcopal ordination.

Secondly, another reason given in the *Interim Statement* (p. 41) for adopting the present plan, with its unification of ministries, rather than being content with the *Church Relations in England* scheme, is that no plan is likely to be acceptable to Anglicans which does not conform to the *Appeal to All Christian People*, issued by the 1920 Lambeth Conference, and to the remarks made by one of the committees of the Lambeth Conference of 1948, in the second part of the conference report, pages 53 to 55.¹⁶ But the relevant passage of the 1920 *Appeal*, quoted also in the 1948 report at the place mentioned, urges that in any union with a non-episcopal church the ministers of that church should 'accept a commission through episcopal ordination'. The Service of Reconciliation conforms strikingly to the proposals of the Lambeth *Appeal* (not least, be it noted, in the 'Declaration of Intention', which ought consequently to reassure no one), and the words quoted show what this conformity implies.

Thirdly, after the Service of Reconciliation has taken place, but still at Stage One, there is to be occasional administration of the Holy Communion in the Church of England by Methodist clergy (*Interim Statement*, p. 42; *Report*, p. 10). Now, the 1662

Act of Uniformity, which in this respect at least is strictly maintained by modern bishops, and of which no modification is envisaged by the negotiators before Stage Two (*Report*, p. 52), totally prohibits such administration by any who have not been episcopally ordained. One can only conclude that the Service of Reconciliation is intended to confer episcopal ordination.

Fourthly, the 1662 Act of Uniformity also prohibits those who have not been episcopally ordained from holding livings in the Church of England, and the preface to the Prayer Book ordinal, as altered in 1662, prohibits them from performing in the Church of England regular ministerial work of any kind.¹⁷ Here again the law is strictly maintained by modern bishops. It is quite true that the *Report* envisages a revision of the ordinal at Stage One (p. 37) and of the Act of Uniformity at Stage Two (p. 52). But there is no reason why the negotiators should expect these particular regulations to be changed, and they must know that any change in the Act or in the preface to the ordinal of such a kind as to accommodate the view that the Service of Reconciliation does not confer episcopal ordination would automatically frustrate their aim of providing a unified ministry acceptable even to Anglo-Catholics. They are therefore presumably working on the assumption that the requirements of the Act and preface will remain unchanged, and to meet this situation have designed a Service of Reconciliation which confers episcopal ordination.

Fifthly, according to the negotiators, ordination in the Church of England, as in the unreformed episcopal churches, is admission to a special priesthood which enjoys the unique priestly prerogatives of offering the eucharistic sacrifice and formally absolving sinners (*Report*, pp. 23 f., 48). The Methodist Church, however, in the Deed of Union and the statement *Ordination in the Methodist Church* repudiates the idea that its ministry holds any priesthood different in kind from that which its laity holds; and the negotiators have not ventured, as in the case of the Church of England, to ascribe a sacerdotal doctrine of the ministry to the Methodist Church. Now, it would be possible to argue that, both in episcopal churches and in the Methodist Church, ordination is primarily a divine act, and admits to the Christian ministry; and that if these priestly prerogatives truly belong to the Christian ministry, Methodist

ministers possess them whether they know it or not. But the negotiators, who accept the doctrine of intention (*Report*, p. 28),¹⁸ could hardly argue in this way. On the presuppositions of the negotiators, the repudiation of the unique priesthood of the ministry by the Methodist Church inevitably means that its ordinations are defective in intention. And the obvious way to remedy the defect would be by episcopal ordination, which the Service of Reconciliation, admitting Methodist ministers to 'the office of priest' by the imposition of a bishop's hands (*Report*, p. 43), is presumably intended to confer.¹⁹

Practical Conclusions

In this welter of opinions and policies on intercommunion, certain things at least seem plain. (1) No church ought to make it a condition of intercommunion that there should first be agreement even in those matters of belief and practice on which Scripture gives no clear guidance. This the Canons have been construed as doing, and in the current revision of the Canons it ought to be made explicit that the Church of England does not wish them to be understood in such a sense. The present tendency in Canon Law revision, however, is rather to erect new barriers than to break down old ones.²⁰ (2) These new barriers to intercommunion (the requirement of episcopal confirmation in communicants and episcopal ordination in ministers, even when they belong to other churches) are not countenanced by the existing Anglican formularies, any more than they are by Scripture. Anglicans have therefore no right to make the acceptance by Methodists of bishops and episcopal reordination a condition of intercommunion, and those responsible for the present attempt are gravely hindering the unity of the Church. (3) If, after a proper examination of the formularies of the two churches, it can be established (as it surely can) that there is no disagreement upon the fundamentals of Biblical Christianity, and an edifying way can be found of composing the difference between the two churches on the use of fermented wine, intercommunion, in the sense of occasional hospitality, readily extended by each church to communicants from the other, ought to be formally and lawfully sanctioned without delay. Whether this would promote actual union is beside the point. The *Interim Statement* (p. 41) denies that it would. But

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when any action is a Christian duty, the beneficial results which might follow it are a secondary consideration. And where there is an earnest concern for unity, the establishment of intercommunion would at least prove no hindrance. Indeed, as an implicit recognition of Methodist ministers and Methodist communicants, it would *help* to promote union, and would incidentally set a good example to the other branches of the Anglican Communion. (4) Granted that intercommunion would not by itself promote actual union, yet the acceptance of episcopacy would not by itself promote union either, nor would full communion, and the same is true of the acceptance of episcopacy and full communion combined. The only thing (besides earnest concern and prayer) which would, under God, promote union, is a fearless and thorough examination of *all* the problems which union involves. The negotiators have examined two of these problems, full communion and episcopacy, and Stage One of their programme of action implements the solutions which they propose. But other problems, equal in importance, greater in number, and in some cases greater in difficulty, are left by the negotiators not only unsolved but unexamined. Such are the questions of doctrinal standards, modes of worship, and relations between Church and State, parish and circuit. These are simply postponed, as needing to be solved only in time for final union at Stage Two. But if all these problems are to be postponed, it is a truly extraordinary proposal which the negotiators make on page 9 of the *Report*, that those who enter on Stage One (and so settle, after a fashion, the issues of episcopacy and full communion) should in so doing pledge themselves to proceed to Stage Two also (whether the other problems prove capable of solution or not). In view of this, it looks as if L. Davison is indeed speaking for the negotiators as a body when he defends their reticence on Stage Two by saying, 'We came with proposals for the unification of the ministry on the basis of episcopacy. *This we believe to be the main issue*' (in *Unity: a Discussion by Church Leaders*, p. 30—our italics). But such an attitude, though not uncommon, surely shows a serious lack of discernment. (5) If union between the Church of England and the Methodist Church is not to interfere with intercommunion and full communion between the Methodist Church and other churches at home and abroad, the Church of England must be

willing to sanction intercommunion and full communion with these other churches on its own behalf. In any negotiations with such churches, it ought not to make the acceptance of episcopacy and reordination a precondition, any more than it ought to continue to do this in its negotiations with the Methodist Church. Full communion with non-episcopal churches would be possible for the Church of England only by a change in the law. This adjustment, as was seen in note 17 on pages 115 to 116, is highly desirable, and would in essence be no more than a revival of pre-Restoration practice. It could be made either at the same time as the other changes in the law which union between the Church of England and the Methodist Church would necessitate, or independently and earlier; and a conscience clause, similar to the South India 'Pledge', could be introduced into the legislation, to ensure that a minister not episcopally ordained, whether from the Methodist Church or from one of the other Free Churches, would not be thrust on an Anglo-Catholic congregation against its will. But such a change in the law would not only safeguard the relations of the Methodist Church with other Free Churches, and their prospects of future union—it would also remove one of the major obstacles to the unification of the Methodist ministry with that of the Church of England; and thus at a single stroke would eliminate two formidable difficulties involved in uniting the two churches.

NOTES

¹ Contrast Canons 2-12, 27, of 1603 (the force of which was somewhat abated by subsequent legislation), with the evidence presented in J. W. Hunkin's *Episcopal Ordination and Confirmation*, C. S. Carter's *Hospitality or Exclusion?*, J. M. M. Dalby's *Open Communion in the Church of England* and G. E. Duffield's *Admission to Holy Communion*. On the history of Free Church practice, see E. A. Payne in *Intercommunion* (ed. D. Baillie and J. Marsh), pp. 96-103, which is supplemented with regard to Methodist practice by H. Roberts, *Anglican-Methodist Conversations: Summary and Exposition of the Official Report*, p. 24 f., and J. C. Bowmer in *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, vol. XXXIV (1963-4), pp. 109-13.

² Not to be confused with the *Open Letter* on the Anglican-Methodist proposals, which appeared in 1964.

³ According to L. Davison, one of the Methodist negotiators, all that is meant is that the churches must pledge themselves to proceed to Stage Two if possible, and to go on trying whatever the setbacks (in *Unity: a Discussion by Church Leaders*, pp. 3 f., 63 f.). But this is not the natural meaning of the words used in the *Report*. The reason it gives for making such a proposal is that 'the existence of two parallel Churches, side by side, in full communion, would be anomalous and unsatisfactory except as a step towards and a means of achieving the ultimate goal of union'. This clearly assumes that to proceed to Stage Two will be possible, and consequently the pledge proposed is a pledge actually to proceed to it. The remarkable character of this proposal and what lies behind it are discussed on p. 111.

⁴ This point is well made by the distinguished Congregationalist John Marsh in *Unity: a Discussion by Church Leaders*, p. 7—Whether, in terms of what is said on p. 9 f. of the *Report*, the negotiators ought not to call the relationship between the Methodist Church and the other Free Churches 'full communion' rather than 'intercommunion', we need not discuss. It should be noted, however, that what is in danger is not only the readiness of the one church to admit the members of the other churches as communicants (open communion), or, over and above this, the readiness of the one church to accept the ministrations of the other churches' pastors (intercommunion). For at present, Methodists are not just willing (like many Anglicans) to communicate in the other Free Churches, but also to invite the pastors of the other Free Churches to administer communion on occasion in the Methodist Church (see R. W. H. Jones, in *Unity: a Discussion by Church Leaders*, p. 9); and they would be willing to admit those pastors into the ministry of the Methodist Church, should they wish it, without requiring them to be re-ordained (full communion). In any future negotiations towards a union between the Methodists and one or more of the other Free Churches, this fact would have great importance, and full communion must therefore at all costs be preserved.

⁵ The only talks known to be in progress are the long-standing negotiations with the Presbyterians, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, in his widely reported address to a Methodist synod at Canterbury on 4 March 1964, was not able to produce any other example of such discussions than

this. Even the negotiations with the Presbyterians are primarily negotiations with the national church of Scotland, not with the Presbyterian Church of England. Of course, intercommunion can exist without a negotiated agreement, but where there has been a breach of fellowship, as in England, negotiations are necessary.

⁶ See p. 105.

⁷ For moderate Anglicans to communicate in the Free Churches may not have been so customary, but there is evidence of their doing so as early as 1681—see J. W. Hunkin, *op. cit.*, p. 100 f.

⁸ The objections to occasional communion were more often directed not at the practice in itself but at the abuse of the practice by place-seekers (who thus qualified, under the 1673 Test Act, for civil, military and naval offices), and at the supposed inconsistency of declining to communicate in the Church of England always, when one is willing to do so sometimes.

⁹ See J. W. Hunkin, *op. cit.*; N. Sykes, *Old Priest and New Presbyter*; C. S. Carter, *Ministerial Commission*, ch. 3. The only significant precedent for this view is supplied by the Nonjurors.

¹⁰ See the relevant literature mentioned in note 1 above.

¹¹ See the works mentioned in note 9, and in addition C. S. Carter, *The Reformation and Reunion*; N. Sykes, *The Church of England and Non-Episcopal Churches in the 16th and 17th Centuries*; and, with regard to the Church of Scotland, G. E. Duffield, in the *Church of England Newspaper*, 13 and 20 October 1961.

¹² The retrograde character of the report *Church Relations in England* is striking, when compared with the *Outline of a Reunion Scheme for the Church of England and the Free Churches in England* (1938), which followed the general lines of the South India scheme; and in view of the critical reply to the 1938 proposals given three years later by the Free Church Federal Council, one would have thought that the hopelessness of inviting the Free Churches to accept a much more rigid episcopalianism was obvious. Admittedly, the Anglican negotiators had a precedent for taking a more rigid attitude in the 12th Resolution adopted by the Lambeth Conference of 1920, and an even more explicit one in the 42nd Resolution adopted by the Lambeth Conference of 1930—see *The Lambeth Conferences (1867–1930)*, pp. 41, 172. But the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference do not bind the constituent churches of the Anglican Communion (as was observed in note 3 on p. 51 above), and these particular resolutions were disregarded by the negotiators of 1938. Moreover, the response to the *Open Letter* on intercommunion, which appeared in 1961, some years after the report *Church Relations in England*, has rendered it extremely doubtful whether the Church of England at large would wish to be guided by the Lambeth Conference in this particular.

¹³ *Report*, p. 59 f.

¹⁴ As the service stands, the suggestion by L. Davison that the 'Resolution of the Methodist Conference' which forms part of the service (see *Report*, p. 46) might state that the Methodist Church does not regard the service as a reordination of its ministry (in *Unity: a Discussion by Church Leaders*, p. 16 f.), even if adopted, would not meet the situation. For the intention required of the recipient of a sacrament in 'Catholic' theology is simply the intention to receive what the Church gives, and it is very doubtful whether Anglo-Catholics would regard such a statement (however regrettable they might think it) as invalidating the rite or making it any less truly an ordination. But, quite apart from this, the suggestion is hardly prac-

licable, since the resolution in question is a resolution for the reception of Anglican ministers by the Methodist Church, and not, of course, for the reception of Methodist ministers by the Church of England.

¹⁵ Many others, of course, have expressed an opinion on the meaning of the service, but apart from the Archbishop of Canterbury, none, however eminent, has the same right to speak on the intentions of the Anglican negotiators as those negotiators themselves.

¹⁶ These pages contain a criticism of Archbishop Fisher's sermon *A Step Forward in Church Relations*, printed in the report *Church Relations in England*. (The negotiations on which this report was based were initiated by his sermon.) The 1948 Lambeth report contains other relevant matter also—on p. 63 of part 2, and on p. 40 of part 1 (Resolution 56 *b* and *c*)—and the same policy has since been endorsed in the 22nd Resolution of the 1958 conference (see *The Lambeth Conference 1958*, part 1, p. 36, and compare part 2, pp. 31 f., 36–40). In the same strain is the far-reaching general principle laid down in the 42nd Resolution of the 1930 conference that 'intercommunion should be the goal of, rather than a means to, the restoration of union'—*The Lambeth Conferences (1867–1930)*, p. 172. This principle, like the principle that Anglicans can accept communion only from ministers who have been episcopally ordained, was explicitly rejected by the 32 theologians in their *Open Letter* on intercommunion, which appeared in 1961, a few years after the *Interim Statement*. Had it appeared a dozen years earlier, the negotiations with the Methodist Church and the preliminary negotiations might well have taken a very different course. But in 1961 the negotiators were already committed to the policy which their *Report* now embodies. Nevertheless, the *Open Letter* and the support which it evoked have brought into serious doubt the conception from which the negotiators have been working, of what is likely to be acceptable to members of the Church of England. For no one who supported the *Open Letter* could without inconsistency support the proposals in the *Report*, and anyone who is supporting them simply because he thinks that no other proposals would have a chance of being accepted is clearly acting under a delusion.

¹⁷ These are only domestic rules: there have been similar rules among some Presbyterians, likewise involving the reordination of ministers who come over from the churches of a different polity. The introduction of these rules in 1662 is in some respects very regrettable, and they would have to be changed before any other denomination could be united with the Church of England on equal terms; but it would be an anachronism to suppose that they originated in the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the ministry, and were intended to reflect upon the general validity of non-episcopal ordination (see J. W. Hunkin, *op. cit.*, esp. ch. 3, and N. Sykes, *Old Priest and New Presbyterian*, esp. ch. 5). Their real purpose was to deal with the Presbyterian Puritans in the Church of England—to punish them for supporting the Commonwealth, and to free the Church of England from their disturbing influence, by making them either submit, in this and other matters, to the requirements of the most rigid uniformity, or lose their ministerial status (see C. S. Carter, *The English Church in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 64 f.; R. S. Boshier, *The Making of the Restoration Settlement*, pp. 270–3, 276 f.). But there were other results, besides those intended: for with the rejection of all the clergy who would not submit, nonconformity was so strengthened that the Church of England before very long ceased to be in a real sense the church of the nation; and not only so, but by the rules then introduced, unity between the churches of the Anglican Communion and other re-

formed churches throughout the world was permanently impeded. (Incidentally, in view of the statement on p. 25 of the *Report* that 'At different times non-episcopally ordained ministers have served in the Anglican Church, but not regularly. The Book of Common Prayer rules that episcopal ordination is necessary for regular ministration in the Church of England,' it ought to be stressed that the Church of England had no such rules before 1662. Dean Sykes, had he lived to sign the *Report*, would certainly not have suffered this error of history to stand uncorrected.)

¹⁸ For some account of the doctrine of intention, see p. 47 above.

¹⁹ The form of the prayer which precedes the laying on of hands is significant only in the light of these five considerations, for though it is based on the corresponding prayer in the Anglican service for the ordering of priests, contained in the Prayer Book, there are some striking differences. Moreover, the prayer seems also to have been influenced by the corresponding prayer of the Methodist ordinal, contained in *The Book of Offices* (for the Methodist prayer differs a good deal from its Anglican model). The fact that the Service of Reconciliation implies episcopal ordination raises an important question: Does the service imply the historic Anglican view of episcopal ordination, or the Anglo-Catholic view of it? Does it imply that episcopal ordination is simply the traditional mode of ordination, whereby the previous ordination of ministers from churches which (very likely through no fault of their own) lack it, is merely given a more regular form; or does it imply that episcopal ordination is the only ordination which one can be sure is valid in the eyes of God, and that ministers from non-episcopal churches, however much God's uncovenanted mercies may have blessed their ministry, and however 'real' their ministry in this respect may be, are in every other respect, and particularly with regard to the prime ministerial functions of offering the eucharistic sacrifice and absolving sinners, to be regarded as unordained? The last of the five facts listed above definitely implies the Anglo-Catholic view, and the first two imply at least a formal concession to it, like that which the *Report* explicitly makes on p. 48. The third and fourth facts, on the other hand, do not imply more than the traditional Anglican view, and the declared attitude throughout the negotiations has been a willingness to tolerate both views, not imposing either (see, for example, *Report*, pp. 7 f., 12, 25, 48). Yet one can hardly expect the Methodist Church, when faced with the Service of Reconciliation, to be satisfied with this broad-minded tolerance of a view which reduces their ordinations to insignificance. Only if the Anglo-Catholic view were explicitly denied could one think that Methodists might be willing to submit to such a rite.

²⁰ See G. E. Duffield, *Admission to Holy Communion*.

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